DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 455 872 JC 010 547

AUTHOR	Scheper, George L., Ed.
TITLE	Community College Humanities Review, 1999.
INSTITUTION	Community Coll. Humanities Association.
ISSN	ISSN-0748-0741
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	198p.; Published annually.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Community College Humanities Review; v20 n1 spec iss Fall 1999
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Community Colleges; Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Context; Cultural Differences; *Cultural Images; Cultural Influences; *Ethnic Groups; Foreign Countries; *Humanities; *Indigenous Populations; Intercultural Communication; Multicultural Education; Two Year Colleges; Western Civilization
IDENTIFIERS	Aztec Art; *Mexico; *National Endowment for the Humanities

ABSTRACT

This special issue of the Community College Humanities Review contains articles generated by National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institutes, held over several years. The institutes provided opportunities for academics from a variety of humanities disciplines and types of institutions to interact over an extended period of common study of topics associated with the encounters of European and indigenous cultures in the New World. The papers included are: (1) "Gender Relations and Political Legitimacy: Replacing Patrilineal with Ancestral Inheritance of Power in Ancient Mayan Society" (Lowell S. Gustafson); (2) "The Making of the Face and Heart: Notes on an Aztec Metaphor" (Paul Aviles); (3) "Image as Text in Post-Contact Mexican Books and Artifacts of Indigenous Origin" (George L. Scheper); (4) "Constructing Nature and Ordering Space/Spain and Mexico" (Mary Ruth Donnelly); (5) "Kiva in the Cloister" (Felix Heap); (6) "La Llorana: the Weeping Woman" (RoseAnna Mueller); (7) "The Liminal Space of Desire in the New Poetry of Alma Luz Villanueva" (Cesar A. Gonzalez-T.); (8) "Writing Shalako: The Anthropologist as Tourist, from Cushing to the Tedlocks" (Ron Denson); and (9) "Seriously Funny Native American Authors" Jacqulyn Kilpatrick. (NB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

CCHA

COMMUNITY COLLEGE HUMANITES REVIEW

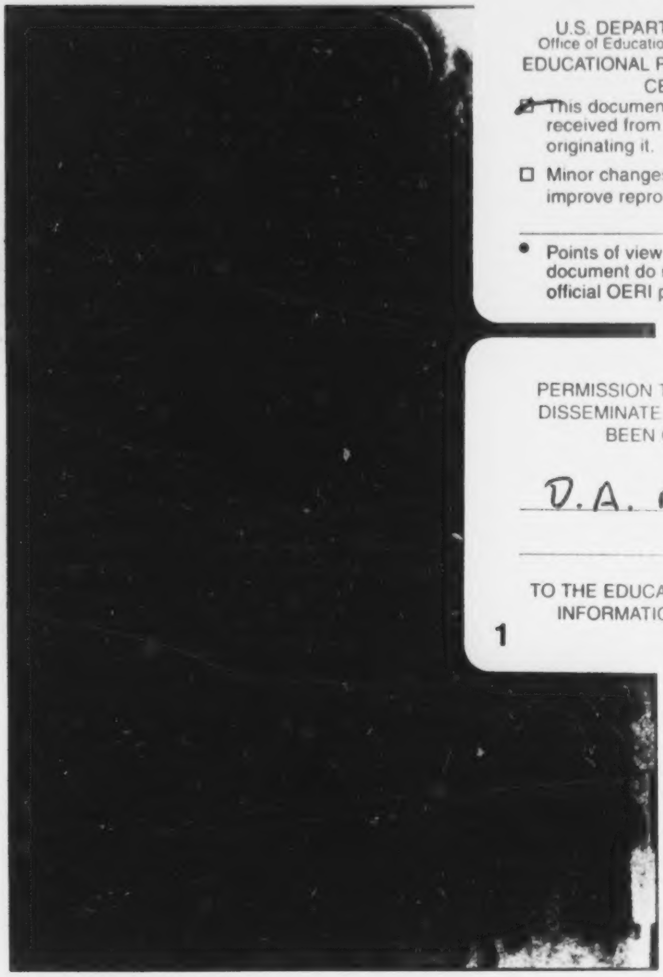
Vol. 20, No. 1, Fall 1999

Special Issue

New World Cultural Studies

Guest Editor and Institute Director: George L. Scheper

ED 455 872



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D.A. Berry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

The place of Aztec origins: the seven caves of Aztlan

Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca, c. 1547-1560

Bibliothéque Nationale (Paris), MS 46-50, fol. 16r.

JC010547

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CCHA

Articles from National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institutes
Sponsored by the Community College Humanities Association

COMMUNITY COLLEGE HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION

The Community College Humanities Association is a nonprofit national organization devoted to promoting the teaching and learning of the humanities in two-year colleges.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Members at Large:

David A. Berry, *Chair*
Essex County College
Newark, New Jersey

Constance Carroll, *President*
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego, California

Stephen Mittelstet, *President*
Richland College
Dallas, Texas

Daniel Moriarty, *President*
Portland Community College
Portland, Oregon

Paul Tambrino, *President*
Iowa Valley Community College
District
Marshalltown, Iowa

A. Zachary Yamba (*ex officio*)
President
Essex County College
Newark, New Jersey

Division Presidents:

Central Division:
Rick Bailey
Henry Ford Community College
Dearborn, Michigan

Eastern Division:
Noel P. Robinson
County College of Morris
Randolph, New Jersey

Pacific-Western Division:
Bernie Knab
Chemeketa Community College
Salem, Oregon

Southern Division:
John Beck
Vance-Granville Community College
Henderson, North Carolina

Southwestern Division:
Michael Matthews
Tarrent County Junior College
Fort Worth, Texas

CCHA NATIONAL OFFICE

c/o Essex County College
303 University Avenue
Newark, New Jersey 07102
www.ccha-assoc.org

Executive Director, David A. Berry
Office Manager, LeaLea Boze-Cale
973-877-3577

The Community College Humanities Review is published annually by the Community College Humanities Association. Its purpose is to offer a forum for scholarly work which will provide readers with articles addressing issues of research, curriculum change, and developments within the humanities disciplines. By this means, the *Review* contributes to the growth and development of the community of humanities scholars nationally.

Managing Editor:

Ned M. Wilson, Ph.D.
Essex County College
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Editorial Board:

Myrna Goldenberg, Ph.D.
Montgomery College
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Pamela Benson
Tarrant County Junior College, NE
Hurst, Texas 76054

Robert Sessions, Ph.D.
Kirkwood Community College
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 54206

Mary Louise Shannon
Florida Community College at
Jacksonville
Jacksonville, Florida 32256

Bill Florence
Chemeketa Community College
Salem, Oregon 97306

Manuscripts for the *Community College Humanities Review* are welcome. Submissions should focus on issues consistent with the purposes of the journal and should be submitted to the Editor through the Community College Humanities Association office at Essex County College. Submissions should conform to the *Review* style. All will be acknowledged, and authors will be notified of the decision of the Editorial Board. The Editor reserves the right to make changes not affecting the substance of a submission. Authors will receive three reprints of their articles. Additional copies may be obtained from the CCHA office upon request: include a check payable to CCHA for $15.00 to cover costs.

CCHA wishes to acknowlege the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Published for CCHA by:

PrintFast
Roselle, New Jersey

4

ISSN 0748-0741
©Community College Humanities Association, 1999

Special Issue Fall 1999

New World Cultural Studies

Articles from National Endowment for the
Humanities Institutes sponsored by the
Community College Humanities Association

Guest Editor and Institute Director:
George L. Scheper

Articles in this volume were generated in connection with the following Summer Institutes funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities:

"Center and Periphery in New Spain:
16th and 17th Century Spanish and Indigenous Cultures
in Mexico and New Mexico"
(1995 and 1998)

"The Maya World in Guatemala, Chipas and Yucatán"
(1997)

David A. Berry
Project Manager
Executive Director
Community College Humanities Association

COMMUNITY COLLEGE HUMANITIES REVIEW

SPECIAL ISSUE FALL 1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 **Introduction: George L. Scheper**

4 **Gender Relations and Political Legitimacy: Replacing Patrilineal with Ancestral Inheritance of Power in Ancient Mayan Society**
Lowell S Gustafson

31 **The Making of the Face and Heart: Notes on an Aztec Metaphor**
Paul Avilés

62 **Image as Text in Post-Contact Mexican Books and Artifacts of Indigenous Origin**
George L. Scheper

104 **Constructing Nature and Ordering Space/ Spain and Mexico**
Mary Ruth Donnelly

114 **Kiva in the Cloister**
Felix Heap

128 ***La Llorana*: the Weeping Woman**
RoseAnna Mueller

135 **The Liminal Space of Desire in the New Poetry of Alma Luz Villanueva**
César A. González-T.

156 **Writing Shalako: The Anthropologost as Tourist, from Cushing to the Tedlocks**
Ron Denson

169 **Seriously Funny Native American Authors**
Jacquelyn Kilpatrick

CONTRIBUTORS

George L. Scheper, Director and Co-Director of the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institutes, "Center and Periphery in New Spain: 16th and 17th Century Spanish and Indigenous Cultures in Mexico and New Mexico" (1995 and 1998), and "The Maya World in Guatemala, Chiapas and Yucatán" (1997), is Professor of Humanities and coordinator of the Aritfacts of Culture Interdisciplinary humanities program at The Community College of Baltimore County—Essex, in Maryland.

Paul Avilés, associate professor of English at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York, is a poet and translator, winner of an Individual Artist's grant from the Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Institute in 1998.

Ron Denson teaches in the Writing Program at Ithaca College, New York, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Insitiute in 1998.

Mary Ruth Donnelly teaches literature and composition and has served as chair of Communication/Humanities at Belleville Area College in Illinois, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Institute in 1998.

César A. González-Trujillo, founding chair of Chicano Studies at San Diego Mesa College, is author of *A Sense of Place: Rudolfo A. Anaya, An Annotated Bio-Bibliography.*

Lowell S. Gustafson, Associate Professor of Political Science at Villanova University, author of studies of the Falkland [Malvinas] sovereignty dispute, economic development in Latin America, and a forthcoming study of Thucydides' theory of international relations, was a fellow in the "Maya World" Institute in 1997.

Felix Heap, a former Franciscan friar, is Professor of Art History at Boise State University, in Idaho, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Institute in 1998.

Jacquelyn Kilpatrick author of Celluloid Indians: *Native Amercans and Film,* teaches in the English Department of the College of Arts and Sciences of Governor's State University in Illinois, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Institute in 1998.

RoseAnna Mueller, translator of Montemayor's *Diana*, is Foreign Language Supervisor and Humanities Coordinator at Columbia College Chicago, and was a fellow in the "Center and Periphery" Institute in 1995.

Introduction

George L. Scheper

It is a pleasure to introduce the works in this special issue of the *Community College Humanities Review* generated by colleagues who have participated in one of the recent National Endowment for the Humanities Institutes it has been my privilege to direct or co-direct. Most of the papers come out of the most recent of the projects, "Center and Periphery in New Spain: 16th and 17th Century Spanish and Indigenous Cultures in Mexico and New Mexico," based in Mexico City and New Mexcio in the summer of 1998; one of the papers derives from an earlier Institute on that same topic, held in 1995, and one comes from an Institute on "The Maya World" held on-site in Guatemala, Chiapas and Yucatán in 1997. These Institutes, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, provided unprecedented opportunities for academics from a variety of humanities disciplines and from every region of the United States and from a great variety of types of institutions, including community colleges and public and private liberal arts colleges and universities, to interact collegially over an extended period of common study of topics associated with the encounters of European and indigenous cultures in the New World.

The seminars and site visits were led by visiting scholars in the forefront of research in their areas of specialization, but the interdisciplinary richness of discussion that was the hallmark of these projects derived from the collective contributions of the participant fellows themselves. Wonderful dialogues and debates, spontaneous explications, heated discussions and sudden clarifications, and equally sudden mystifications, occurred often in our seminar rooms, but also, unforgettably, at the Pyramid of Quetzelcoatl at Teotihuacan, in the palace rooms at Palenque, in the excavation tunnels of Copán, inside the church at Zuni Pueblo, atop the north rim of Canyon de Chelley, and other unforgetable locales that it was our privilege to visit together as travelling communities of scholars.

The papers in this special issue reflect the diversity of interests and disciplines of the fellows of these Institutes. All concern New

World cultural studies, and I have arranged them in something of a geographic and chronological sequence, taking us from the classic world of the Maya in Central America in the 8th and 9th centuries, through studies of the Aztec world in the periods just before and just after European incursion, and on into studies dealing with Native American and Spanish-language cultural manifestations north of "the Border." In trying to select a cover image that would in some way reference this diversity, I settled upon an image from a 16th century Mexican manuscript, the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca, purporting to show the seven caves of origin of the Aztec ancestors in a place called Aztlan, the preferred name now also given by Chicano/a activists to the present Southwest of the United States, as designating their sense of their Aztec and, more recently, Mexican, origin and homeland.

In the opening paper in this issue, "Gender Relations and Political Legitimacy," political scientist Lowell Gustafson analyzes the matter of gender and political legitimacy in the classic maya city-states. Building on suggestions made by David Freidel and the late Linda Schele, Gustafson shows, with reference to classic Maya texts and iconogaraphy how strictly patrilineal patterns of descent were replaced with more inclusive models of ancestral inheritance of political and religious authority that allowed for the institution of queenship. In "The Making of the Face and Heart: Notes on an Aztec Metaphor," Paul Avilés draws upon his work as poet and translator to trace and explicate a suggestive and haunting metaphor found in numerous Nahua language texts, and which has rich reverberations in other literatures, reverberations which Avilés traces backward and forward both in literary history and myth-history. My paper on "Image as Text in Post-Contact Mexican Books and Artifacts of Indigenous Origin" is an overview of the question of literacy in New World indigenous cultures, arguing that not only Maya glyphic texts, but seemingly purely pictorial works should be looked upon as textual, somewhat in the manner of theatrical prompt books, scripts or musical/choreographic scores.

In "Constructing Nature and Ordering Space/ Spain and Mexico," Mary Ruth Donnelly calls attention to the large facts on the ground, offering a comparative analysis of how public, and private, spaces were arranged and alligned in relation to the surrounding natural topography in both Spain and Mexico both before and during the era of contact. Similarly, Felix Heap, in "Kiva in the Cloister," explores the ways in which cultural transmissions occurred in architectural forms: how cultural continuities between North Africa, Andalusía and Mexico are encoded in architectural forms such as the mudejar elements in the Franciscan church at Tlaxcala — or how kivas located in mission complexes in the Southwest mark cultural negotiations rather than triumphant superimpositions.

RoseAnna Mueller's essay "La Llorana: the Weeping Woman" traces one lesser-known literary trope from its likely pre-Columbian origins, through its enshrinement in narratives of the conquest of Mexcio, to its on-going life as a component of Mexican and Chicano/a oral tradition, as reflected in songs, ballads and contemporary family story-telling. In "The Liminal Space of Desire in the New Poetry of Alma Luz Villanueva," César A. González-Trujillo offers a close reading of one paramount theme in the work of a contemporary California poet; the theme is the heart's desire, "the archetypal, the geometric outlines of our human experience," taking us back, in fact, to the Aztec metaphor explored by Paul Avilés in the earlier paper.

In "Writing Shalako: The Anthropologist as Tourist, from Cushing to the Tedlocks," Ron Denson offers a critical assessment of the double-bind of "anthropological tourism": the desire to observe and document the anthropologically "pure" event, while at the same time impacting the event by "being there." Focussing on the Hopi snakedance and the Zuni Shalako, Denson shows how this double-bind plays out historically, from the time of Frank Hamilton Cushing to the more recent involvements of Dennis and Barbara Tedlock. And in "Seriously Funny Native American Authors," Jacquelyn Kilpatrick demonstrates how humor, a traditional component of Native American oral tradition, continues to function as a strategy of "survivance" in recent Native American fiction.

The editor and the authors wish to acknowledge and thank the National Endowment for the Humanities for the finanacial support which, in part, helped bring these individual projects to realization.

Gender Relations and Political Legitimacy: Replacing Patrilineal with Ancestral Inheritance of Power in Ancient Maya Society

Lowell S. Gustafson

Do the Mayans present one more case of the "world historical defeat of the female sex" in which matriarchy was replaced by patriarchy? (Engels 218) If so, what was the process by which this occurred in the Maya world and over what period of time did it occur? Were cases of women participating in politics anomalies; a few exceptions that prove the rule of patriarchy? Or, without idealizing the ancient Mayans or reading current views into their world, could their social system be understood better with different terms? While hierarchical social patterns most often did give a greater role to men, did ancient Maya politics nevertheless see the systemic participation of women? We will consider that question in this paper, looking primarily at the role of women in the inheritance of political legitimacy.

While political legitimacy in ancient Maya society is still often considered to have been inherited through a patrilineal succession, there is enough evidence to suggest that there was more often an ancestral succession in which both genders are significant as sources of the right to rule.Gender relations were often significant in establishing the political legitimacy of ancient Maya rulers. Legitimacy was derived in part through inheritance from divine and human parents, as well as through marriage. In mythology, architecture, ceramics, painting, weaving, terra cotta figurines, and statuary, Maya art shows the importance of male-female relations in establishing the accepted right to rule. This asserted right was accepted as legitimate because of prevailing attitudes that developed in the wider political culture. These attitudes can be surmised in part from archeological work, such as burial practices. Ancestors—men and women—were buried under houses and fields to give inherited right to live and grow crops at certain locations. From farmers to kings, power and wealth was inherited from ancestors of both genders, although men were often politically the more important.

It has become common to claim that political legitimacy among the ancient Mayans was patrilineal. These claims are often based on the predominance of men in public art. Indeed, this is often the case. For example, Altar Q at Copán has sixteen men in a dynasty handing down the scepter of power from one to the next. However, the prevalence of this claim and the art on which it is based has led to inadequate interpretations of a great deal of art that demonstrates the importance not just of men alone, but of the relations between men and women, and the role of women alone, in establishing political legitimacy.

There is a spectrum in the role of gender relations in establishing Maya political legitimacy. At the one extreme, men establish their right to rule completely exclusive of women. There are many cases where this is so. However, here we will analyze the cases in which legitimacy is drawn from divine and human males and females, from marriage to important women, and from mothers alone. We also will analyze those cases in which art portrays women themselves as rulers or at least regents without reference to adult males.

Political legitimacy among the ancient Maya was earned and inherited. Rulers needed to show through ritual that they could maintain the order of the cosmos, give birth to new periods of time, and show valor by capturing and sacrificing noble warriors from other sites. However, they also needed to demonstrate that they legitimately had inherited their position from the ancestors. From the divine grandmother and grandfather who participated in the creation of the cosmos and humanity, to distant human founders of dynasties, to parents, both men and women from the past provided, in part, legitimate right to rule.

The Maya cosmos was never uni-linear; it was multifaceted and complexly interwoven. (Miller and Taube) There were many gods. Each day was governed by various divine forces. Different gods ruled specific days and phases of the moon. Each person had *wayob*, or animal counterparts, which participated in that person's life. The dead lived under the floors of a family's house, giving the living the right to be there. Time was characterized by overlapping cycles of the sun, moon, Venus, and various constellations. Time moved both in a linear direction, moving ahead from a starting date of the most recent creation in the Long Count calendar, and in various cyclical patterns of 260 and 365 day calendars. The Maya saw not single lines of causality, but complex, multiple interconnections. (Bricker and Bricker, 193)

Maya society was also differentiated. Different groups of people performed specific tasks in society even by the pre-classic period. Men and women normally played different and defined roles in society, even in the Formative period. (Flannery and Winter 42-44) For most of the society, women were weavers, cooks, and caretakers of children; men were masons or carpenters and corn planters. However, society, and much of the art from which it came, showed complementary, not oppositional gender relations. Gender relations were interconnected in a multifaceted complexity that made single lines of inheritance difficult to conceive. Mothers and fathers were too intimately involved in the creation of the cosmos and the clan to imagine that they had not together bequeathed their land and its bounty to living humans. Subsequently, Mayans were neither patriarchal nor matriarchal. Legitimate right to rule, as legitimate right to live in a certain house or grow corn on a certain *milpa*, came through a complex inheritance.

This does not deny that there often seems to be a hierarchy among the ancient Maya. But there are too many cases of interconnections and reverse patterns of influence to make them simply exceptions to the rule. Instead, a complex, differentiated system of inherited as well as earned legitimacy made gender relations an important part of the ruler's right to govern. Right to property and the right to rule often does seem to run directly through father to oldest son. However, this patrilineal system has within it so many exceptions and variations that at least it needs to have its definition qualified and probably needs a different name to represent a more bi-gendered reality. That is why I will argue that ancestral, rather than strictly patrilineal, lines of inherited political legitimacy provides a better term. It may at times be primarily patrilineal, but it provides the flexibility in interpretation that more accurately accounts for the variations in Maya practice.

Being a mother was not only a private role. Being a mother provided part of the right for rulership. So much public art showed (often deceased) mothers and fathers above the ruler, essentially giving them the right to hold the position of power. Parentage statements sometimes give a higher or even exclusive value to the father, but they very often include the mother or other female ancestors. Inscriptional histories' accounts of women as wives and mothers of kings show that women were not playing the same or even as active a political role as men, but clearly they are included because they are important, if not primary, in the political contests of the time. They are by no means uninvolved, purely household, private persons. At Piedras Negras, women appear on stelae as mothers or wives of kings. At Palenque, a king's mother gives him a shield, the symbol of war, as he ascends to power. At Yaxchilán, the wife of a king draws blood from her tongue in order to bring up the vision of the dynasty's founder who gives the king legitimacy. In the Bonampak murals and on stele 2, the mother and wife of the king appear in all the rituals, including the torture and killing of captives. Lady Olnal, the ninth ruler of Palenque, governed the city in her own right. Lady Kan-Ahaw-Tzuk (Lady Six Celestial Lord) ruled Naranjo as a regent and was the only parent listed on her son's parentage statements.

While it was almost always the king's son rather than a daughter who became the next ruler, there was often a question as to which one of his wives' sons would become the king. Polygamy meant that wives and their respective families might jockey to have a member of their clan become the next ruler. If they were successful, all members of the wife's family could benefit materially from the selection. In this way, property was sometimes distributed through the female as well as the male lines.

Just as elite women participated in politics, goddesses played a crucial role in the creation of the cosmos and humanity. The Old Moon Goddess, Chak-Chel ("Great or Red Rainbow"), was the midwife of creation, enabled the rebirth of the Maize God and the birth of his sons. She cares for children and weaves with exacting mastery. In the Dresden Codex, she pours water from her vase as she helps God L, Ek'-Chuwah, sending the flood that destroys the Third Creation. Caves are entrances to the primordial water from which the mountains are drawn. Water can also rush out of caves. The crack in the ball-court from which the Maize God grows is also where sacrifice takes place. Water and the entrance to cave-wombs can be either life-giving or life-taking. Woman can be nurturing, but she is also to be feared.

Although all this is well known, it remains commonly asserted that the Mayans were patrilineal. The purpose of this paper is to problematize the concept of patrilineality in ancient Maya politics and suggest that there was ancestral, albeit hierarchical, rather than strictly patrilineal inheritance of political legitimacy by rulers in ancient Maya society.

We will begin by noting the patrilineal claim made to interpret ancient Maya social practice as a source of political legitimacy. This, it will be argued here, is in contrast to gender relations as accounted for in Maya mythology. Here, we will consider the *Popol Vuh*, the meaning of caves and clefts for the Mayans, and their ideas of cycles. These mythologies and ideas were associated with the ancient Maya social basis for gendered legitimacy, as seen in the next section. We will then look at how these factors influencing political legitimacy are represented in art at Tikal, Naranjo, Palenque, Jaina, Jonuta, Yaxchilán, and Bonampak.

I: The Patrilineal Claim and Its Qualifications

The claim that political legitimacy is derived from patrilineal descent is made frequently. For example, Schele and Freidel note that, "The principle of selecting a single inheritor of supreme authority in the family from each successive generation usually focused on the eldest male child." Larger groups of families called lineages acknowledged a common ancestor. Lineages were combined into clans. Families and lineages were often organized hierarchically, with the top group asserting an accepted direct male line to the founding ancestor. "The Maya institution of kingship was also based on the principle of inheritance of the line by a single male individual within any one generation leading back to a common ancestor. The principle of inherited status permeated the entire society . . . ." They go on to state that "public monuments erected by the Maya king during the Classic period emphasize not only his role as shaman, but also his role as family patriarch." (Schele and Freidel 84-7) Another author argues that "the major sites were governed by a ruler who claimed patrilineal descent from the founding ancestors." (Bassie - Sweet 17)

In contemporary Maya families, there is a clear division of labor by gender. Men farm and women prepare food and weave in the home. Boys are given little toy field tools; girls toy household utensils. Men predominate in the public affairs of the village, while women enjoy substantial authority in the household. (Schele and

Freidel 42) Men dominate the public square while women have their due within the private household patio.

The observation that has not yet gained wide currency is made by McAnany, who sees variation over time and place regarding patrilineage. “Clearly, Maya society of Postclassic and possibly earlier times exhibited a tendency toward patrilineality in genealogy and inheritance; on the other hand, some of the best-known genealogies of elite Classic rulers, such as Pakal the Great of Palenque, are based on matrilineal inheritance. Bilateral descent patterns, furthermore, seem to have been operative among the Maya nobility of the Classic period (Marcus 1983: 470).” (McAnany 123)

II: The Mythology of Gender Relations.

Myth, or the set of stories used to understand the cosmos and humans’ place in it, reflects and creates attitudes that are important for political legitimacy. If accepted dynastic pedigrees are important for that legitimacy, and dynasties are traced back to creator mothers and fathers as well as human ones, then we start to see the importance of gender relations. Maya myth is infused with gender relations and the importance of females as well as males.

II A: *The Popol Vuh*

Part One of the Quiché story of creation, the *Popol Vuh*, is the account of how how Xpiyacoc and Xmucane “accounted for everything.” (The Yucatec Maya version of these grandparents were Itzamna and Ix Chel. Shrines of Ix Chel, or Lady Rainbow, were pilgrimage sites on Cozumel and Isla Mujeres. She was the patroness of childbirth, pregnancy, and fertility. In the Dresden Codex she is Chac Chel and was the goddess of weaving and midwifery. She is associated with, and sometimes identified as the moon and the sea.) In the beginning was primordial waters; the gods’ word caused earth to rise up out of it. They then brought forth creatures to praise them, name their names, and keep the days. They told the creatures, “We are your mother, we are your father.” (*Popol Vuh* 67) When all the creatures could do was squawk and chatter, the gods tried again to create humans who could provide and nurture, invoke and remember the gods, give them praise and respect. This time they made humans out of mud, but the beings just crumbled and dissolved. The gods tried again to make humans; this time out of wood. They decided to talk to Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, the "'Grandmother of Day, Grandmother of Light,' as the Maker, modeler called them."

Unable to create people themselves, the creators of the earth go to the "Midwife, matchmaker, our grandmother, our grandfather," and say, "let there be planting, let there be the dawning of our invocation, our sustenance, our recognition by the human work, the human design. . . . Run your hands over the kernels of corn, . . ." and turn these wood creatures into humans. But the new creatures had no blood, no sweat, no fat. They did not remember the Heart of Sky. "Their faces were smashed because they were incompetent before their mother and their father, the Heart of Sky, named Hurricane." (*Popol Vuh* 72) They became monkeys and were banished to the forest.

In Part Two, the *Popol Vuh* then changes to the story of the god twins, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, who go out to bring down Seven Macaw with a blowgun. Seven Macaw is the puffed up imposter who pretends to be the sun. His wife is Chimalmat and their two sons are Zipacna and Earthquake. The hero twins are preparing the way for the successful creation of humans and cannot permit imposters to interfere with the true creation; the imposter family of Seven Macaw must be defeated. They ask Xpiyacoc and Xmucane for protection in their mission. (*Popol Vuh* 79) Using genius and showing great courage, the twins destroy each member of this imposter family.

Part Three is the account of Hunahpu and Xbalanque's parents and grandparents. Xpiyacoc and Xmucane have twin boys, One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu. The noise from their daily ball-playing annoys the underworld gods. The gods of Xibablba summon the twins to play ball in their dark world. They are terrible gods, these Scab Stripper and Blood Gatherer and Demon of Pus and others who draw blood from people and reduce them to bones. These gods present the twins with a series of tests, who fail to figure out how to pass them. For their failure, they are sacrificed by One and Seven Death. One Hunahpu's head was cut off, and his body buried along with his brother's body at the Place of the Ball Game Sacrifice. (The ball-court is a portal, an opening to the underworld. It is usually shaped as a split place; a long, slim area with slanted plastered stone sides on the sides.) The gods put his head in a calabash tree, which causes skull-looking fruit to grow.

Blood Moon, the daughter of Blood Gatherer, hears about the sweet fruit of that tree and goes alone to it. The skull spoke to her and spit in her right hand, impregnating her with Hunahpu and Xbalanque. Blood Moon escapes the wrath of her father and flees to the middle world, where One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu's mother, Xmucane, lives. Nothing is said of the grandfather here.

Blood Moon announces to the grandmother that her sons are not really dead and that One Hunahpu is the father of her fetuses. Xmucane is also the mother of a second set of twins, One Monkey and One Artisan. She is skeptical of Blood Moon's claim and tests the pregnant woman by saying she must go to harvest a netful of corn from the one withered corn plant in the garden. Blood Moon goes to the garden and calls to the Guardians of Food, "Thunder Woman, Yellow Woman, Cacao Woman, and Cornmeal Woman". (*Popol Vuh* 103) She pulls ear after ear of corn from the dried plant, filling a big net with life-giving food. This convinces the grandmother that Blood Moon really is her daughter-in-law.

Blood Moon gives birth to Hunahpu and Xbalanque, who are mistreated by One Monkey and One Artisan. The twins eventually defeat their mean uncles, who turn into monkeys. The twins' tools do the gardening for them, giving them the time to take up playing ball on the court above Xibalba. The underworld gods are disturbed again and summon the twins, just as they had their father. Messengers from Xibalba inform the grandmother, who is left sobbing by herself at home after receiving the news. The twins send a message back with a series of animals who tell the grandmother that each of the twins has planted a green ear of corn in the middle of their house. When it dries, she may say that perhaps they died; when it sprouts again, she may say that perhaps they live. There is a cycle of life, death, and rebirth. This is as true for humans as it is for corn.

Even though the hero twins pass the series of tests the underworld gods give them, the gods want to kill them anyway. The twins willingly let themselves lose the ballgame with the gods, in effect letting themselves be sacrificed. When the boys are burned and their bones ground, the corn they had planted dried up. The plants grow again when the gods throw the bone-dust into a river, where it sinks to the bottom and turns back into the boys. The water regenerated the hero-twins. The restored boys return to trick and kill the major gods of Xibalba, defeating the underworld.

The twins are able to speak to their father and put One and Seven Hunahpu back together, although they must leave them at the Place of Ball Game Sacrifice. They promise to remember and honor their fathers, after which the hero twins ascend into the sky, with the sun belonging to one and the moon to the other.

With the earth created, imposters and the underworld defeated, and regeneration enacted, the *Popul Vuh* can turn to the successful creation of humans in Part Four. The Bearer, Begetter, Makers, and Modelers named Sovereign Plumed Serpent say that "the dawn has approached, preparations have been made, and morning has come for the provider, nurturer . . . . Morning has come for humankind". The sun and the moon appear above the Makers and Modelers, who were at the "Split Place, Bitter Water Place is the name: the yellow corn, white corn came from there". The water at Split Place became human blood and the corn there flesh. "And so they were happy over the provisions of the good mountain, filled with sweet things, thick with yellow corn, white corn, and thick with pataxte and cacao . . .—the rich foods filling up the citadel named Split Place, Bitter Water Place. All the edible fruits were there . . . . The way was shown by the animals." Xmucane ground the corn nine times, which was worked by the Bearer, Begetter, Sovereign Plumed Serpent, who were engaged in

> the making, the modeling of our first mother-father,
> with yellow corn, white corn alone for the flesh,
> food alone for the human legs and arms,
> for our first fathers, the four human works.

Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar "are the names of our first mother-fathers" made from the corn ground by Xmucane. At first they were so perfect they were god-like, so the gods decreased their sight and understanding. Then they made a wife for each of the first four. These women "became ladies of rank, giving birth to the people of the tribes, small and great". The gods finally had succeeded in creating people who "remembered the Maker . . . . They were reverent, they were givers of praise, givers of respect, lifting their faces to the sky when they made requests for their daughters and sons". (*Popul Vuh* 145-150)

While the Hero Twins, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, are the main actors in the myth, the important role of women and of gender relations should not be overlooked. The divine couple grandfather-grandmother Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, the mother-father Sovereign Plumed Serpent, One Hunahpu and Blood Moon, the imposter Seven Macaw and Chimalmat, the first four human mother-fathers and their wives, all show gender relations or bi-gender essence to be central to the story of the creation of humans. Humans' essential character is that of nurturer and provider, thought, at least in the West, to be feminine and masculine characteristics.

The role of women in the story is noteworthy as well. One and Seven Hunahpu, the twin sons of Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, are heroic but fail to pass the tests of Xibalba. Blood Moon makes her own independent journey from Xibalba to the middle world where people will live. She travels with no twin or other god. After appealing to female guardians of food, she passes Xmucane's test of harvesting a netful of corn. It is her sons who do pass the tests of Xibalba and defeat its major gods. When Blood Moon arrives at the house of Xmucane, the grandmother is raising One Monkey and One Artisan by herself. These two single divine women run the household. They do so without the presence of fathers. When the final and successful creation of humans does occur, it is Xmucane, the grandmother, who grinds the corn used in making them. The daily work of most Maya women, grinding corn, was the work of the gods at the creation of human beings.

Schele and Matthews argue that there is much classic period art that not only represents *The Popul Vuh* as it is written, but supplements the written version of the story. According to them, after the Hero Twins revive their fathers, the Maize gods are attended by beautiful women. The Maize gods wake up the Paddler Gods and God L, as they are often called. The Paddler gods carry the Maize gods in a great canoe, represented in the night sky as the Milky Way. They paddle to the constellation we call Orion, but which they saw as a Cosmic Turtle. The Paddler Gods set up the Cosmic Hearth with three stone-stars on August 13, 3114 B.C. We call these three stars Alnitak, Saiph, and Rigel and see tham as Orion's Belt. The triangular cosmic hearth was recreated in the hearth in each Maya home, in which women cooked the meals.

The god Chak cracked open the turtle's shell with a bolt of lightening. The Maize gods grew from that crack, also represented as a

Ballcourt, and are watered and nurtured by the Hero Twins. The Maize Gods stand in the crack, from which also stretch two serpents, who form the path of the sun. (Schele and Matthews 210-12) Entwined serpents in the sky often represent the sky umbilicus which connects the sky with the earth.

Five hundred and forty-two days after setting up the hearth, the gods could create the four-corner cosmos and erect the center tree. The Maize gods also spun the heart of the sky in the same motion that (female) weavers spun thread. The constellations would move around this north pivot of the sky, providing the basis of measuring time. Time and space were thereby established. The cord used by the gods in setting up the four cornered universe may also have been an umbilicus. As one translation of *The Popol Vuh* states:

> Its four sides (or sections)
> Its four cornerings
> Its measurings
> Its four stakings
>
> Its doubling-over cord measurement
> Its stretching cord measurement
> Its womb sky
> Its womb earth
> Four sides
> Four corners as it is said. (Schele and Matthews 35)

As Schele and Matthews note, "To create the harmonies of the cosmos, the gods used the same method of measure as a weaver, house builder, and cornfield maker. But cord measuring also revealed the innate symmetries of nature. . . ." (Schele and Matthews 36) The umbilicus that connected the levels of the cosmos and gave it direction also connected Maya rulers with the divine and the ancestors. Here, a Vision Serpent would connect the living ruler with sources of legitimacy and permit the birthing of a new period of time.

The gendered imagery in this is striking. A bolt of lightening opens a crack in the Cosmic Turtle Shell. There is a female path through which the male sun travels, the male Maize Gods (corn) are given birth from the female opening in the turtle (earth). A sky umbilicus connects the different levels of the cosmos. Both male and female are fully involved in the creation of the cosmos.

This imagery would find resonance in the lives of most Maya, since it was common for women to prepare maize and other foods at a three stone hearth. After having children, they often buried the umbilicus under the hearth. Contemporary Maya will ask where you are from by asking, "Where is your umbilicus buried?" (Schele and Matthews 26)

II B: Caves, Clefts, and Water

Humans are made from corn at Split Place, Bitter Water Place, on a good mountain. Mountains were raised by the gods from the primordial waters. Accesses to those primordial waters are found in caves opened by lightening and marked by a sacred Ceiba tree. Water often flowed from these caves. The *Popol Vuh* says that corn came from that Split Place in the mountain. Bassie-Sweet argues that corn may well have actually grown first most abundantly at cave openings with their "sheltered environment, soil accumulation and higher moisture levels." She goes on to observe that "many Mesoamerican groups believed that their creators fashioned humans from corn and water found in a cave and that humans first emerged from a cave. The theme of procreation was consistently associated with the cave throughout Mesoamerica, depicting it as a womb and a source of life. . . . [T]he cave was a powerful location for fertility rites and extension cycles of creation, destruction, and re-creation (birth, death, and rebirth)." Several Ritual of the Bacabs incantations refer to the four directions (north, south, east, west) as the four crossroads. "One of the deities named is IX Hol-can-be 'lady opening-at-the-four-crossroads.' This name also refers to the caves at the midpoints. . . ." (Bassie-Sweet 4, 10, 11, 23) The cave is a womb and the Split Place the entrance to the womb where humans are created from thick corn gruel.

Corn itself comes from a divine woman. Drops of blood from Xmucane turn into kernels of corn from which humans are made. Life, fertility, sustenance, and humans are from the menstrual flow, the female letting of blood. This has been true in recent Maya groups as well. Bassie-Sweet observes that, "In Tzotzil Chenalho the spirit of corn is manifested as the maiden daughter of the rain god." Atitecos have a similar belief. For them, "there is a specific spirit who resides in each ear or kernel of corn, a generic spirit of all corn who resides in two female stone fetishes called the heart of corn... ." (Bassie-Sweet 12, 14)

These wombs with drops of blood—these caves with kernels of corn—are within sacred mountains. At the midpoint of each of the four directions is a mythical mountain with a cave, which has a sacred tree at its opening. The cave provides access to the sea beyond the mountain and to the underworld.

Clefts in rocks or in the sky are entrances to the underworld and the primordial waters. The Maya observed the Milky Way as a faint arching band of white across the sky. "In one section the band divides into two, forming a cleft. The Quiche call this cleft the road of Xibalba (the underworld) or the black road." (Bassie-Sweet 47)

The interaction between the female caves with male symbols are frequent. The Split Place is opened for entrance to the cave for creation by lightening, often represented as a snake. Chac is the rain god. The word Chac is a cognate of *cauac*, meaning lightening, thunder or storms. Chac created lightening by throwing his axe or beating his drum. The serpent was its animal counterpart. Cauac monsters represent mountains in most Maya art. "In some myths the rain god assisted in the procurement [of corn] by splitting open the rock or the cave." (Bassie-Sweet 68)

The (male) sun rose each morning out of a cave in the east and entered the underworld at night through a cave in the west. In the Ritual of the Bacabs, Itzamna and Ix Chel live in the waters of the directional caves and Ix Chel is associated with the east. In *The Popol Vuh* too she has an eastern association. She lives at the house of Hun Hunahpu near the eastern horizon. It is in the east where each morning the mighty son is born.

However, the grandmother is terrible and awe inspiring as well as life giving. The Dresden Codex shows her pouring water from a vase as the world is destroyed. And caves can be equally destructive. Winds are often said to come from any of the four directions, marked by mountains with caves. The prevalence of tropical storms and hurricanes in the region which can blow from any direction, and the experience of cool air rushing from the mouth of a cave, give a good basis for such a belief.

Each Maya city has at its center a recreation of the Maya cosmos. They have temples which are sacred mountains. Plaster-covered plazas stretch out in front of the temples, recreating the primoridial sea. In front of the temples are stelae, recreated sacred trees. Inside the temples are small, dark rooms which recreate sacred caves. It is inside of these rooms where rulers stave off destruction at the end of periods of time and recreate or give birth to the next period of time. They do this by letting blood from their genitals, often in the small room at the top of a temple. The drops of blood in the womb of the sacred mountain brought forth civilizational fertility. Scattering rites consisted of scattering drops of blood from the genitals in order to create or give birth to new periods of time or of political legitimacy: the right to rule. Just as Xmucane created corn by letting drops of blood and then created humans by grinding the corn from which they were made, political legitimacy was established in part by staving off destruction and engaging in the creation of a new period through the letting of blood from the genitals. The closest male leaders could come to imitating the life-creating properties of menstrual blood was by letting blood, commonly from their penises, although also from ears, fingers, or other body parts. Women were occasionally portrayed as letting blood from their tongues, imitating the imitation. These self-mutilation rites were accomplished with stingray spines, obsidian blades, or other sharp instruments. The blood would be collected in bowls with blotting paper and then burned as incense offerings to the gods. Along with fasting, hallucinogens, music, and dancing, the pain would induce visions of the ancestors, giving ritual rebirth to them. They returned to grant legitimacy to the efforts of the practitioner.

II C: Cycles

Cycles in the Maya agricultural society are crucial. The cycles of heavenly bodies, crops, menstruation, and birth are closely related. The times for planting and harvesting are determined by the seasons, which correspond to annual movements of the stars. This gives rise to a 365 day solar calendar with eighteen months of twenty days plus a special "month" of five days. The regular months have twenty days because the mathematical system is vigesimal; instead of using ten fingers, the Mayans used fingers and toes to begin their mathematical system. There is also a 260 day ritual calendar. This calendar is comprised of twenty named days and thirteen numbers. There are thirteen levels to the upper world or heavens, and thirteen lunal cycles in a solar year. The first name meets the number one every 260 days. This is as close as the vigesimal system can get, using whole numbers, to the common length of human gestation. Day one of the ritual calendar corresponds to day one of the solar calendar every fifty-two years.

The daily cycle of the sun, the lunar cycle, Venus' 542 day cycle, and the menstrual cycle are all part of the cyclical movement of time. Time does not point forward in a single direction; it moves ahead in circles. It does not exactly repeat itself, but moves forward in circles. Time is not an arrow; it is a Slinky.

III: The Social Basis for Gendered Legitimacy

Myth gives one type of voice to belief. However, social practices are other indicators of the bases for political legitimacy. Myth shows the importance of gender relations among the ancient Maya; social practices do as well. One of these practices whose remnants can be observed is that of burial. The ancestor gods created humans so that they themselves could be named and venerated. This is done not only for the ancestors, but for the descendants as well. To be able to name progenitors gives descendants certain rights and claims to resources. Proper inheritance gives right to power and wealth.

This is why, since the beginning of Maya culture, ancestors were buried in the family compound or farmland. There were no communal cemeteries on the outskirts of town. The dead were not excluded from society; they continued to play an integral role within it. Mayans did not have legal title to land from the state; they inherited land through their lineage. Eventually, elites raised carved stelae and altars to document inherited right to rule; but many Maya households from before the time of Christ proved their right to land by the ancestors living beneath their floors. Ancestor veneration was not just for piety; it was highly practical.

The lineage name was patronymic and passed through the male line, "but Maya society was not a patriarchy in the strict sense of the word since importance was given to matronymics, referred to as naal or 'mother's name.' Furthermore, the term for noble, *almehen*, was a compound of al ('a woman's offspring') and *mehen* ('a man's progeny')." The contemporary Quiché refer to their lineage head as *chuchkajaw* or mother-father, which is also the meaning of *totilme'iltik* in Tzotzil. (McAnany 24, 61)

The archaeological evidence for both genders being considered as ancestors is found in burials. Burials help demonstrate inherited right to the homestead and the *milpa* (cornfield). Vessels, figurines, jewelry, garments, and other items would often be placed on or around the corpse. As is the case in various Maya sites for so many factors, there is great variation in the number of males and females buried as ancestors. At Seibal, for example, there are very few females found buried under structures (Tourtellot 1990). However, at Tikal, only 22 percent of the thirty-two known burials can be identified as male. "For Copán, Webster (1989:14) estimates that four to five hundred individuals were buried at elite Group 9N-8; of the two hundred and fifty burials recovered, two-thirds of the skeletons identifiable as to sex are female." (McAnany 61, 123)

IV: Gender Relations, Public Art, and Political Legitimacy:

A. Tikal and Naranjo

Mayans typically built over the smaller buildings of their predecessors. The first buildings of what became the highly developed North Acropolis at Tikal were started around the second century B.C.. Burial 167 in Structure 5D-Sub-2-2nd is of a noble woman. This female ancestor of Tikal is part of Tikal's foundations of its hereditary elite. (Coe "Tikal, Guatemala;" Coe "Tikal: Ten Years")

An unidentified king from about 9.4.0.0.0 (514 A.D.) is shown on Stele 23 with his mother and father at either side. That same stele, located in an elite residential complex on the southeastern edge of the city, records the so-called Lady or Woman of Tikal, who was born on 9.3.9.13.3 (504 A.D.). South and east are traditional female directions, while north and west are male ones. She at least came from an elite lineage, although her role in Tikal's dynasty is unclear. Altar 5 shows two dancing noblemen kneeling at the bones of a disinterred woman. (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 262-4)

Caracol and Calakmul battled with Tikal and Naranjo in the seventh century, perhaps leading to friendly relations between the latter two cities. In the early seventh century, a Tikal noblewoman was buried in Structure 5G-8 in the suburbs of the city. Her parting gift was a polychrome vessel that included an inscription saying that it had once belonged to the Ruler I of Naranjo. Why a bowl having belonged to this ruler ended up in her grave is anybody's guess. Marriage, exchange of gifts, and a love story are all possibilities suggested. (Schele and Freidel 179) Whatever the case, this woman was somehow involved in the epic struggle between these cities, which Tikal and Naranjo finally lost in 9.10.4.16.2 (637 A.D.). For two hundred years, there were no monuments built at Tikal. The long hiatus had begun.

Marriage alliances began the effort that would undo the hegemony of Calakmul and Caracol. A woman from Itzan married Flint-Sky-God K of Dos Pilas, who became king there in 645. His sisters or daughters married kings at El Chorro and El Pato. This and a series of successful battles enabled him to neutralize Calakmul. His daughter, Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau (Lady Six Celestial Lord) then went to Naranjo, where she reestablished a royal house after its previous destruction by Caracol. (Sharer 233) Stela 29 at Naranjo tells of her arrival and the reestablishment of the dynasty. She married a nobleman of Naranjo, although his name is not recorded. It was her letting of blood that called forth the ancestors and reopened the portal to the other-world. She performed her first rituals in Naranjo just one hundred and sixteen days after Ah-Cacaw resurrected the kingship at Tikal. Ah-Cacaw did for Tikal much what Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau did for her adopted city. Naranjo and Tikal were coming back.

Five years after her arrival, Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau gave birth to Smoking -Squirrel, a male heir to the throne. When five years old, he became the king of Naranjo. Throughout his long reign, every time he raised a monument to celebrate an anniversary of his accession, he paired it with another monument to his mother, the source of his legitimacy. (Schele and Freidel 187) There is no monument to his father. Prestige from associations with foreign power, not gender, was important to Smoking-Squirrel.

When Smoking - Squirrel was still five years old, Naranjo began a military campaign against its enemies. Stele 24 shows Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau standing on the back of a nearly naked, battered captive, a lord of Ucanal, taken in 693. Ucanal is just south and west of Caracol; defeating it in battle would show Naranjo gaining in its contest with Caracol. Stela 22 tells of the unfortunate lord being brought to a sacrificial rite. In 710, Smoking-Squirrel attacked Yaxhá. Naranjo had regained its position as a major power in the Petén under the leadership of Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau and the son who always remained grateful to her.

In Tikal, Ah Cacau restored his city's greatness. Among his achievements was Temple II, which was probably in honor of his wife. That temple looks directly across a courtyard to his own funerary Temple I.

IV B: Palenque

One of the Maya world's most beautiful and ambitious architectural and artistic cities is largely devoted to·demonstrating political legitimacy through male and female lines. Palenque shows that patrilineality had become an important practice and idea in ancient Maya society. An enormous expenditure of energy was made to demonstrate that legitimacy could be inherited through the female line. Presumably this was done because the audience was skeptical. However, this energy was expended because actual practice had not followed the patrilineal idea and by appealing to deeply embedded notions about bi-gender ancestral inheritance.

According to the art commissioned by Pacal the Great and his eldest son, Chan-Bahlum, Paenque's dynasty began with Bahlum-Kuk on March 11, 431 A.D.. The line would continue through 799, the last date recorded at Palenque. In between, however, two women ruled: Pacal's mother and great-grandmother. Ladies Kanal-Ikal and Zac-Kuk ruled in their own right. They were not regents, as was Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau. Patrilineality would have dictated that women could not rule in their own right, that daughters should not inherit power from fathers, and that children could not inherit power from their mothers. Since two women had ruled at Palenque, this meant that there were three patrilineal lines by the time Pacal the Great took power. There would have been just one line if only men had been ruling the whole time.

The first patrilineal line went from Bahlum-Kuk through eight successors to Lady Kanal-Ikal. How she came to be ruler is unknown. Robert Sharer speculates that neither her father, Chan-Bahlum I, nor his brother probably had any male children. Any record of her husband has not been found. Her son, Ac-Kan, succeeded her; although traditionally his right to rule would have come from his father. Because of this, the lack of a record of his father is important. Did Lady Kanal-Ikal prevent it to ensure that the lineage went through her? Another of her sons was Pacal I, whose daughter, Lady Zac-Kuk (White Macaw), became the second woman to sit on Palenque's bench of power. Pacal died about a year before Ac-Kan did in 612. Did Ac-Kan have no sons, did Lady Zac-Kuk outmaneuver the one(s) he had, or what? Since losing contenders did not get their names listed on stelae and lintels, the story will probably never be known. Lady Zac-Kuk's son was Pacal the Great, who should have rightfully ruled through the line of his father, Kan-Bahlum-Mo'.

Straight patrilineal succession had not been the practice in Palenque for long before Pacal the Great went on a building spree. Patrilineal dynasty may have worked well in principle when father could be followed by eldest son. The stories of why this neat system was not followed in Palenque have yet to be discovered. It is not difficult to imagine the flaws in the patrilineal system. A king may not have a son. His sons may be highly unqualified to rule. Or perhaps, patrilineality was not as firmly established as has been assumed. Had there been hierarchical ancestral inheritance in which men might be favored but women could have long been contenders under a variety of circumstances? Did Pacal the Great take power without the legitimacy that a neat, single patrilineality would have given him, and did he embark on his building program to make up for the deficiency? Had patrilineality become established over time, and did Pacal have to restore earlier cultural norms regarding the importance of bigendered ancestry? Did Pacal create ideas of inheritance through women in order to justify de facto reality? In any case, his goal was to establish clearly the right to rule flowing through women as well as from men.

The means to do this was by building the Temple of Inscriptions and the Group of the Cross. "These remarkable monuments were designed to interpret the dynastic history of Palenque in such a fashion as to make their legitimate rights to the throne undeniable." (Schele and Freidel 223 To do this, Pacal and his son needed to present their dynastic, inherited legitimacy as direct and constant. The only way to do that was to show that legitimacy could be inherited through men and women. They showed that Pacal's mother was like the mother of gods who was present at the beginning of the current period. Then they showed that Pacal was born on a day symmetrical to the birthday of the goddess. Pacal the Great thus had the same essence as the goddess. With both mother and son essentially related to the goddess, Lady Zac-Kuk and Pacal were creators of legitimate rule, replicating the creation of an ordered cosmos. The transmission of rightful rule ultimately came from the goddess mother of gods.

Did Pacal and his son Chan-Bahlum develop this justification, or was much of it developed by Lady Zac-Kuk? She ruled by herself for three years before her twelve year old son acceded to power. The tablet recording his accession is noteworthy in that Lady Zac-Kuk holds the crown, a symbol of authority. She lived for another twenty-five years, during which time she was no doubt a force to be reckoned with. Getting her son on the throne, thwarting the designs of her clansmen who were most likely interested in the position, and consolidating his power must have been largely her accomplishment.

After her death in 640, Pacal's ambitious building program began. In 647, three years after his father's death, he dedicated Temple Olvidado in the west of the city. He then built the subterranean galleries of the Palace, House E, House B, and House C. By his seventies, he began the enormous Temple of the Inscriptions in which his tomb and famous sarcophagus lid would be located.

In the Group of the Cross, Pacal the Great's son, Chan-Bahlum, develops Pacal's theme that descent through Lady Zac-Kuk replicates the practices of the gods at the time of creation. His grandmother is like "Lady Beastie," whose spirit counterpart is the moon. In the inscriptions at the Group of the Cross, he explicitly makes a correspondence between the creation of the world, emphasizing the role of the First Mother, and dynastic events at Palenque. Chan-Bahlum portrays the First Mother as the first ruler of Palenque and as having been the first to shed blood for the city. "The model for human and kingly behavior was again manifested through the actions of the First Mother rather than the First Father." (Schele and Freidel 255) In this, Chan-Bahlum, like his father, was like the First Mother. Just as the First mother had let blood to create maize from which humanity was created, Chan-Bahlum let blood to create visions of the ancestors and gods—to give birth to the gods and ancestors. Pacal and Chan-Bahlum were the legitimate Mother Kings of Palenque.

IV B 1: Terra Cotta Figurines at Palenque, Jaina, and Jonuta.

In addition to stelae, altars, and architecture, terra cotta figurines are another important category of the visual arts that tell us much about gender relations and political legitimacy among the ancient Maya. Unlike the carvings on stelae and altars, these figures are in-the-round, showing all sides of the subject in fully three-dimensional poses. They show richly detailed expressions and the fine detail of clothing. They often present more informal, every-day scenes than the more formal, state presentations of rulers on stelae. There are also many more women represented in these clay figurines than on monumental imagery. Figurines were being produced in Mesoamerica by 1,500 B.C. at Tlatlico, Xochipala, and Las Bocas. Most of these figurines depicted women, with hips and legs often particularly pronounced. (Gallenkamp and Johnson 98-100) By 100 A.D., Teotihuacan produced great numbers of the figurines, often of women in *huipiles* (brightly woven shirts) and head-dresses. The Maya produced figurines at many sites, but those of Palenque, Jaina, and Jonuta are particularly famous due to their number and quality. Many at Jaina have been recovered from graves, showing their ritual function. They are also found in temples, homes, and elsewhere.

Many figurines are of women dressed in their finest headdress, jewelry, *pik, k'ub* or *huiplil* or *po't*, (undergarment and overblouse) and standing in a formal, ritual pose. Some depict transparent *k'ub* or exposed breasts, which was not a violation of modesty. There are very few figurines of naked women, although there is one of a woman who may be one of the gods helping to dress the Maize God after he was reborn in the Ballcourt of Xibalba. There are many figurines of pregnant women, nursing women, or women with animals, which may be their own or their children's animal spirit companion. They may also show the economic importance of women in their roles of animal- as well as child-rearing. (Pohl 392-99) There are many figurines of women weaving or cooking There is one of a woman with a folded book on her lap. Scribes, or "He of the Holy Book" were most commonly male, although one of the portraits of Lady Eveningstar at Yaxchilán names her as "Lady of the Holy Book." (Coe and Kerr 36, 95, 99) Perhaps this figurine is of a female scribe or at least a literate woman. There are figurines of old women, some with sunken breasts and winkled faces, some with (grand)children. Some are of a woman with a rabbit, the symbol of the young Moon Goddess. Myths about the Moon Goddess sometimes emphasize the nurturing side of her character, sometimes its licentious side There are figurines of women in whose garments old or deformed men hide and tweak her breast. (Schele 19-55)

One group of figurines shows a woman at a portal made of intertwined rattlesnakes. The feather fans on their heads identify them as War Sepents. A sky glyph is above the woman. The word kan means both snake and sky. The Vision Serpent moves like smoke up to the sky or like a long-feathered quetzal as it flies through the sky. Another figurine holds a shield. While these women are not warriors, they do seem to have a role within war-making.

These figurines show women as weavers, mothers, caretakers, grandmothers, scribes, and participants in ritual. While there are none of women as warriors, they nonetheless show the wide-ranging roles women played within Maya society. Figurines of men depict them as scribes, court officials, participants in ritual, ball players, lords, kings, warriors, captives, dwarfs, and sacrificial victims. Most are dressed, but one shows a man screaming in pain from his just perforated penis. One is of a male monkey with an erect penis; their overt sexual behavior in the wild made monkeys a symbol of sexuality for the Mayans.

These figurines show both men and women playing active, varied roles in Maya society and exhibiting a range of characteristics. In addition to child rearing, Maya women are shown in their economically important roles as weavers and animal raisers, and involved at least in a secondary role in war. While there is differentiation in gender roles, and there does seem to be a predominant male role in public offices, women are neither excluded nor unimportant in these depictions.

IV C: Bonampk and Yaxchilán: Split Sky.

The famous murals at Bonampak show something of the role of elite women as well. In the first of three murals, King Chan Muan and his wife watch from a throne the presentation of the young heir to the throne, their son, to the court. While there are no women visible in the second room's battle scene, there are women on the right of the royal entourage in the third mural's portrayal of the torture of male prisoners, whose blood helped seal the heir-designation ritual.

Some of the most dramatic art in the Maya world represents the political role of women and their relationship with male leaders at Yaxchilán. This city stands on the west bank of a horseshoe bend of the Usumacinta River, dividing present day Mexico and Guatemala. The city is surrounded on three sides by water, with an opening to land on only one side. From a hill on which Structure 41 would eventually be built, early Mayans observed that on the longest day of the year, the sun rose from a cleft between the two highest mountains in the Usumacinta region. The name of the city in Mayan meant Split Sky. (Tate 4, 5)

For five hundred years since its founding by Yat-Balam on August 2, 320 A.D., dynastic legitimacy was inherited by the kings of Yaxchilán. Represented by male genitals on a jaguar's head, Yat-Balam, or "Penis-Jaguar," was the father of the patrilineal line of kings. Yet the city's most famous kings, Shield-Jaguar and his son Bird-Jaguar, who ruled the city from 681 to 771, commissioned public art with prominent roles played by women.

The only known representation of Shield-Jaguar's accession rite on October 23, 681 is on Lintel 25, on which the new king's wife, Lady Xoc, is shown having a vision of Yat-Balam, showing the unbroken inheritance of legitimacy from the city's founder. It is striking that this powerful source of legitimacy comes not directly to Shield-Jaguar, but through his wife. On Lintel 24, there is the famous and dramatic scene of Lady Xoc pulling a rope through her tongue in a blood-letting ceremony as Shield-Jaguar stands above her holding a torch to light the ceremony in the temple room. It is this blood letting that opens the portals to the otherworld and gives rebirth to Yat-Balam so that he can bless the accession and then again the birth of Bird-Jaguar. Unlike Lady Wac-Chanil-Ahau of Naranjo, and Lady Kanal-Ikal and Lady Zac-Kuk of Palenque, Lady Xoc was neither a regent nor a ruler in her own right. Yet, she held this prominent public role as legitimizer of power. But why was she celebrating the birth of Bird-Jaguar, who was not her son but was the son by Shield-Jaguar of Lady Eveningstar?

The answer might be in the needs of power politics of the day. Shield-Jaguar may have married Lady Xoc in part because of her mother's and father's families' importance in the city, as noted on Lintel 23. Lady Eveningstar was from the mighty city of Calakmul, and may have been married in part for reasons of strategic alliance. Lady Xoc also was well beyond child-bearing age by the time Shield-Jaguar married Lady Eveningstar. The public art shows that Shield-Jaguar chose the child of Lady Eveningstar to be his successor, satisfying his allies, while publicly honoring Lady Xoc at Yaxchilán, appealing to local elites and potential supporters.

Temple 23, with its famous lintels of Lady Xoc, was commissioned by Shield-Jaguar when Bird-Jaguar was thirteen. However, by the time Shield-Jaguar's long life was over, Bird-Jaguar no doubt had to contend with other adult children and grandchildren of Shield-Jaguar and Lady Xoc. There was a period of ten years between Shield-Jaguar's death and the accession of Bird-Jaguar. There was much consolidation of power and to accomplish and legitimacy to build in that time.

When he did become king, Bird-Jaguar went on an ambitious building program whose aim was to recognize his mother's status and equality with Lady Xoc, as well as to recognize important local lineages. He also married an important woman and publicly recognized her prominent role in public life. Lintel 14 of Temple 20 shows Lady Great-Skull-Zero, the mother of Bird-Jaguar's son, and her brother, Lord Great-Skull-Zero, in a bloodletting rite in which she holds a bowl collecting the blood and blood-stained paper while he holds the vision serpent in whose mouth appears a female ancestor. Bird-Jaguar's temple recognizes the role of his wife's clan in his successful bid to succeed his father.

In Temple 21, we find a stele on which Bird-Jaguar shows his mother, Lady Eveningstar, in a blood letting rite similar to that of Lady Xoc shown on Lintel 25 in Temple 23. Here, Bird-Jaguar is asserting that his mother is just as important as his father's principal wife. Nine days after he became king, Bird-Jaguar dedicated Temple 22, right next to the Temple 23, which celebrated Lady Xoc. On Lintel 5 of Temple 1, Bird-Jaguar holds a scepter in each hand while Lady 6-Sky-Ahau, a foreign wife from Motul de San José, holds a bundle, a symbol of authority. In Lintel 43 of Temple 42, he is assisted in letting blood by yet another wife, Lady Balam of Ix Witz. On Lintel 17 of Temple 21, Bird Jaguar prepares to let blood from his genitals while Lady Balam pulls a rope through her tongue in celebration of the birth of Bird-Jaguar's son by Lady-Great-Skull-Zero. This is a clear parallel to Lady Xoc letting blood in celebration of the birth of Bird-Jaguar to Lady Eveningstar. The only difference here is that Lady Great-Skull-Zero is not foreign born but a member of an important local family. In Lintel 13 in Temple 20, Lady Great-Skull-Zero and Bird-Jaguar celebrate the birth of their son, Chel-Te-Chan. She holds a bloodletter and a bloodletting bowl, grasping the tail of a Vision Serpent out of whose mouth appears Chel-Te-Chan, held in the hand of Bird-Jaguar. Lintel 52 at Temple 55 shows Bird-

Jaguar together with his son, legitimizing Chel-Te-Chan's succession.

Maya kings normally had themselves portrayed individually in public art letting blood, producing visions, taking captives, or engaged in other activities. Shield-Jaguar and Bird-Jaguar are seen with their wives, with noblemen, or their wives and family members are seen without the kings. They are keenly aware that they do not rule alone, but that they need the support of foreign alliances and local noble families in order to hold power. The state had become too complicated for one person to rule alone.

V. Provisional Conclusions

There is sufficient evidence to argue for the ancestral, rather than strictly patrilineal inheritance of political legitimacy in much of the ancient Maya world. This inheritance involved both male and female ancestors. Ancestors were often men alone, but could be parents and grandparents of both sexes, or even females alone. Ultimately, inheritance of right to property and the right to rule came from divine ancestors. It also came from family ancestors who could be given ritual rebirth in bloodletting ceremonies. For men to maintain legitimacy, they had to imitate women's ability to give birth. The frequently recorded period endings and other rituals often show men engaged in some phase of blood letting, which I suggest is imitation of the corn producing menstrual flow of Xmucane. At other times, female leaders are direct actors in politics, especially at Naranjo and Palenque, important representatives of clans as at Yaxchilán, or playing varied roles as at Tikal, Jaina, Jonuta, and Bonampak. Through their own efforts and as ancestors who bequeath legitimacy to their descendants, women are politically important in their own right and in their politically related relations to men.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to acknowledge the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which funded his participation in The Maya World in Guatemala, Chiapas and Yucatan, June 8 - July 19, 1997.

Works Cited

Bassie-Sweet, Karen. *At the Edge of the World: Caves and the Late Classic Maya World View*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996

Bricker, Victoria R., and Harvey M. Bricker. "Calendrical Cycles and Astronomy," in Peter Schmidt, Mercedes de las Garza, and Enrique Nalda, eds. *Maya*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1998.

Coe, Michael D. and Justin Kerr. *The Art of the Maya Scribe*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1997.

Coe, William R. "Tikal, Guatemala, and Emergent Maya Civilization." *Science*, 147:1401-1419.

Coe, William R.. "Tikal: Ten Years of Study of a Maya Ruin in the Lowlands of Guatemala." *Expedition*, 8:5-56.

Engels, Frederick. *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, edited by E. Leacock, New York: International Publishers, 1972.

Flannery, Kent V. and Marcus C. Winter, "Analyzing Household Activities," 42-44, in Kent V. Flannery, ed., *The Early Mesoamerican Village*. New York: Academic Press, 1976.

Freidel, David, Linda Schele, Joy Parker. *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*, New York: William Morrow, 1993.

Gallenkamp, Charles and Regina Elise Johnson. *Maya: Treasures of an Ancient Civilization*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1985.

McAnany, Patricia A.. *Living with the Ancestors: Kinship and Kingship in Ancient Maya Society*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

Miller, Mary, and Karl Taube. *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993.

Pohl, Mary DeLand. "Women, animal rearing, and social status: The Case of the Formative Period Maya of Central America," in Dale Walde and Noreen D. Willows, eds., *The Archaeology of Gender: Proceedings of the Archaeological Association of the University of Calgary. Calgary:* Archaeological Association, The University of Calgary, 1991.

Popol Vuh: The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life, Revised Edition, translated by Dennis Tedlock. New York: A Touchstone Book published by Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Schele, Linda. *Hidden Faces of the Maya*. Singapore: Impetus Communicación S.A. de C.v., 1997.

Schele, Linda and David Freidel. *A Forest of Kings: The Untold Story of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Quill William Morrow, 1990.

Schele, Linda and Peter Matthews. *The Code of Kings: The Language of Seven Sacred Maya Temples and Tombs*, New York: Scribner, 1998.

Sharer, Robert J. *The Ancient Maya*, fifth edition. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

Tate, Carolyn E. *Yaxchilán: The Design of a Maya Ceremonial City*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992.

THE MAKING OF THE FACE AND HEART: NOTES ON AN AZTEC METAPHOR

Paul Avilés

With what face can I say anything?
—DeFoe

With what face then...shal ye heare these wordes?
—Book of Common Prayer

An Aztec metaphor—*in ixtli in yollotl*—which I happened upon by accident, has haunted me for years. The phrase, which translates into English as the face, the heart, at first means nothing to a Western reader who makes no immediate connection between these two parts of the body. Separated from the poetic practices of the ancient Mexicans and from the world-view that produced them by some five-hundred years and one of the most astonishingly ruthless and thorough conquests in history, the reader of Mexica poems in Frankfurt or New York, grappling with orations of the elders, the *huehuetlaltolli*, or a text attributed to Cacamatzin, will time and again and inevitably draw a blank. In terms of mere readability alone, the poems often seem impenetrable: all those x's and t's, all those gods with their thick, unpronounceable names. But Beowulf or Pound, Ashbery, Guest, or the language poets, or even Graham are not easy either, not readily decipherable, yet we read them.

Understand me: I am not making an argument for Aztec poetry here, whose merits each reader will decide on his or her own. What I am saying, however, is that if we apply the same strategies we use with other "difficult" poetries—the same persistence and patience, and a willingness not to understand for long stretches; if we let time work—both on us and on the poems, and allow our reading of them to be influenced by whatever sources come our way to shed light; and if we do all this guided by nothing more than a simple refusal to be shut out—then, as Dr. Williams put it, there's news to be gotten from Mexica poems.

Or from a single phrase in this case, *in ixtli in yollotl*, which appears in the following anonymous Nahua lyric:

> Man-made man:
> a wise countenance,
> master of his face, and a heart
> that is able and understanding

and which Irene Nicholson in *A Guide to Mexican Poetry* explains thus:

> We are born with a physical heart and face, the Nahua poets said, but if we are to be truly men, it is necessary for us to create another heart and another face which are more enduring...There was a phrase for this process for heart-and-face-making: *in ixtli in yollotl*. The heart, *yollotl*, is identified with ixtli, a person's true face, the most characteristic feature of man, and that which stamps upon him a peculiar type of individuality not possessed by animals. Through his face, each person becomes unique. Thus does his life acquire meaning...

So what we find embedded in this single metaphor, in fact, is a full-blown theory of soul-making.

***

Which, for an English-speaking reader, inevitably recalls John Keats' famous letter of April 21, 1819 in which he writes:

> The common cognomen of this world among the misguided and the superstitious is 'a vale of tears' from which we are to be redeemed by a certain arbitrary interposition of God and taken up to Heaven—What a little circumscribe[d] straightened notion! Call the world if you Please 'The vale of Soul-making' Then you will find out the use of the world...

The differences between pre-Cortesian Tenochtitlan and early 19th century London being what they are, a comparison of these two versions of soul-making would seem at the very least absurd, if not downright insane. After all, in poem after poem, the Aztecs sang of the earthly realm as a harsh and ephemeral place. Included in Thelma D. Sullivan's anthology, *A Scattering of Jades*, is the following oration uttered by midwives who, after washing a newborn child, would wrap it and say:

> You have come into the world, a place of suffering,
>   a place of affliction,
> a place of searing heat, bitter cold, harsh winds.
> It is a place of hardship, a place of thirst
>   a place of hunger.
> It is a place of cold, a place of tears.
> Indeed, it is not an agreeable place;
> it is a place of weeping, a place of sorrow,
>   a place where one suffers affliction.
> Here your task shall be weeping, tears, sorrow, fatigue.

Keats' vale of tears, to be sure, except that the weeping is louder...And just as no one in the Aztec world would've called that vision of life on earth misguided and superstitious, so too, the arbitrary interposition of the gods—like the existence of paradise (Tlalocan) or the Region of the Dead (Mictlan)—were accepted as givens. In fact, whim and arbitrariness were standard attitudes of the Mexica gods toward humans as we see in Sullivan's translation of a poem to the god Tezcatlipoca who:

> ever-present, ever close,
> thinks as he pleases,
> does as he pleases;
> he mocks us.
> As he wishes, so he wills.
> He puts us in the palm of his hand, and rolls us about
> like pebbles we spin and bounce.
> He flings us this way and that,
> We make him laugh; he mocks us.

So what, then, are the similarities between the creation of a *face and heart* among the Aztecs and the forging of a soul in John Keats? First off, the two theories share an *agonistic* sense of life. The Nahua people, as we have seen, understood the world to be a place of deep uncertainty and tribulation: "Things slip, things slide," they said, "The world is slippery," and humans are subject to misfortunes and stumbling of all kinds. Keats, as we see from the soul-making letter, likewise understood that Man is originally 'a poor forked creature'...destined to hardships and disquietude of some kind or other; that if he improves by degrees his bodily accommodations and comforts—at each stage, at each accent there are waiting for him a fresh set of annoyances; and finally, that these annoyances, which are native to the world, can in no way be either sidestepped or destroyed. If the earth we live on is no vale of tears for Keats, it is no paradise either. Do you not see, he asks toward the end of his letter, how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a soul?

The second point of similarity is the fact that, for the Mexica people as for Keats, souls will be made here and now—in this world and in this excruciatingly brief lifetime—or not at all. In an essay on Mexica religion, the doyen of Mesoamerican scholars, Léon-Portilla, put it this way:

> ...rather than the threat of punishment or hope for some prize beyond death, what most influenced one's conduct was the desire of achieving on earth...the perfection of the face and heart, and as a result, the happiness of which all humans are capable.

Keats, remember, dismissed the promise of an afterlife, of heaven and a hereafter, with the exclamation: "What a little circumscribe[d] straightened notion!"

Third in this list of unexpected resemblances is the focus on the heart as the undisputed locus of transformation in the complicated process of soul-making, Nahuatl, like modern Turkish or German, is an agglutinative language which means that by use of prefixes, suffixes, and particles inserted into the middle of a word, it can create new terms or condense a highly abstract concept into a single, compact phrase. One of the two terms under discussion—*yollotl*, the word for "heart"—is a case in point.

In the superb introduction to her anthology, *Flor y Canto*, Birgitta Leander lays out the following etymology. Yollotl, she says,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

is composed of three elements: *y* is a possessive prefix meaning "his" or "her" or "of each person"; *oll* is derived from the word for "movement," *ollin*, which in a broader cosmological sense stands for the motor principle upon which the entire Aztec world was founded; the suffix *otl* indicates an abstraction or a collective trait, which yields the meaning "mobility" or "the possibility of movement". In other words, according to Leander, the heart, "the movement inside each person," represents the vital and dynamic aspect—the life force—inside each human being, and is ultimately tied...with the sun which is the dynamic organ of the universe. The world, remember, according to Nahua myth, had undergone a series of cataclysms, each one involving the complete destruction of four earlier eras. The Mexica, Leander adds, living in the fifth and (to their minds) final era of ollin believed that

> grave upset in the celestial order could trigger...the catastrophic end that would blot out the world in a single gigantic and destructive movement—an earthquake—in exactly the same way that previous eras—the four suns of the Tiger, Wind, Rain, and Water—had been destroyed by a series of storms and floods.

On the brink of annihilation always, with the universe in precarious balance at best, the Mexica assigned to the heart an importance which is probably impossible ultimately for us as Westerners to comprehend, particularly as it connects to the Aztec practice of human sacrifice. Yet, as Leander reminds us, viewed from within the pre-Cortesian scheme of things, the sacrifice of a human heart had its own undeniable and even poignant logic:

> The custom of offering still-beating hearts, taken from the chests of sacrificial victims was born of the concept that the universe was governed by that same principle of movement that animated the human body. Living in the cosmic era or "sun" of *ollin* (movement), the Aztecs believed that the heavens should constantly be fed that internal dynamism of human beings who with their *yollotl* (heart), "the movement inside each person," contributed to main-

> taining the smooth functioning of the world.

Is it any wonder, then, that the heart would play so central a role in the Nahua version of soul-making?

Keats too in his letter time and again traces his way back to the human heart which he cites as one of the "three grand materials" required for making a soul. Calling it now a "hornbook," now "the teat" from which the Mind or intelligence sucks its identity, the heart, Keats insists, must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways in order for a soul to be made. Summing up near the end of his letter, Keats says:

> I began by seeing how man was formed by circumstances—and what are circumstances?—but touchstones of his heart—? and what are touch stones?—but proovings of his hearrt [sic]?— and what are proovings of his heart but fortifiers or alterers of his nature?...—and how is Identity to be made? Through the medium of the heart...

The primacy of the heart in the formation of a soul—for either Keats or the Nahua poet's—is beyond question.

For one final point of comparison, we must refer again to Sullivan and to the concept of tona, the human soul, which:

> In the Aztec world...was tripartite. It consisted of the heart, *yollot*l, which [as we have seen] was equated with movement and life. The *tonalli* was equated with heat, the sun, the breath, that spark of life that animated man and the universe. The third, more obscure and less well understood, aspect of the soul was the *ihiyotl*. This is a dark and sinister part of personality associated with an individual's animal alter-ego, the *nagual*.

If the Aztec soul is composed of three aspects, three properties or entities that are constantly shifting and interacting with one another, in Keats' version, the soul is made by "three grand materials [the heart, an intelligence, and the world] acting the one upon the other for a series of years." In both descriptions, as we have also seen, the heart is the uncontested locus of soul-making; and just as the heat, sun, breath and "that spark that animated man and the universe" all point unmistakably to the divine nature of the *tonalli*, so in Keats likewise we are told that individual "intelligences or sparks of the divinity...are atoms of perception—they know and they see and they are pure, in short they are God...." The third aspect of the Aztec soul, the *ihiyotl*, the soul's dark underside (which it is safe, I think, to compare to Jung's formulation of the shadow) has no direct equivalent in Keats. Yet doesn't his third grand material, the world, act as a continual foil to the soul ("I do not believe in...perfectibility," Keats said, "the nature of the world will not admit of it"), and aren't the *ihiyotl*, an individual's alter-ego (the *nagual*), and Keats' always-resistant elemental space all really only different names for counterforces that would check and harness the unbridled development of a soul?

***

Like a palimpsest, the metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl* has insinuated itself into 20th century Mexican letters—unconsciously probably in a statement by Octavio Paz: Latent in every man is the possibility of being, or more exactly, of again being, some other man; obliquely in a line from Rosario Castellanos' poem "The Sea": You are the molder of your flesh as much as of your soul; and explicitly in the early poems of a very different sort of writer, Alejandro Aura, who first began publishing in the post-Tlaltelolco ferment of the late 1960's:

> The masks
> we learned to make
> we made not to conceal
> but to coax
> our true faces to the surface
> We forged them
> from a single substance
> and gave them many shapes.
> We were craftsmen
> artful in our own making.

Even if Paz's notion of a latent, dormant self cannot be traced directly back to the Aztec metaphor of "face and heart," he is expressing the same uncanny sense of a potential face—all we might be, all that we always and already are—and with his insight that that being, that face, is one we yearn to reclaim or return to, he is alluding no doubt also to the Zen concepts of the Original Face and the face before you were born which everyone from William Butler Yeats (in the poem *Before the World Was Made*: "I'm looking for the face I had / before the world was made") to Van Morrison (on his *Too Long in Exile* CD) has improvised on. The line by Castellanos is a more direct allusion to the Nahua phrase, but Castellanos has abstracted the terms transforming the concrete face to "flesh" and the heart explicitly to "soul." In the process, she has emphasized that both are malleable and plastic, and that the work of molding falls unavoidably to each of us. As if to emphasize that responsibility, she uses the formal you, *usted* , which a Spanish-speaking parent shifts to when reprimanding, chastising, or giving orders to a small child, the *usted* acting to underscore the seriousness and importance of the warning or the order being given.

Certainly the most direct and fullest manifestation of *in ixtli in yollotl* is found in Aura's short poem, from his 1973 collection *Volver a Casa*. An English-speaking reader, lacking any connection to Nahua philosophy (much less to the specific—and relatively rare—concept of face and heart) will inevitably be denied full access to the poem. But then, so would most Mexican readers, I suspect. The average Anglophone reader will, however, respond to the rich and problematic phenomenon of the mask in Aura's poem which, potentially anyway, reveals at least as much as it conceals. Likewise, it will take no special knowledge of the Aztec notion of face-and-heart-making to understand that we are the co-creators—accomplices and conspirators—in the making of our faces, that the process is a slow one (as implied by the poem's use of the word *coax*), and that only by constant trial and continual error, by the long practice of both craft and patience over a lifetime will we perhaps succeed in teasing our true faces to the surface.

What the Mexican reader (in contrast to an American or other English-speaker) would intuit, I think, and appreciate somewhat more fully are the ambivalences and dualisms in Aura's poem—a manner of perception and a mode of being deeply embedded in both ancient and contemporary Mexican culture. There is the highly ambivalent matter of masks and their relation to the face, for instance, and the play of surface and depth in the poem which suggests again that each of us possesses both a latent and a manifest face, and is a re-working of the idea found earlier in Paz. The alternation between the One and the Many in this complicated business of face-making is addressed by the lines "We forged them / from a single substance/ and gave them many shapes:" one substance, many faces—a reference to the countless faces in the world, of course, but more importantly, to the many possible faces we can (and do) create.

Finally, in the last two lines, Aura acknowledges the role of art in the shaping of the face, and for me at least, herein lies the genius of this little poem, for one man's art, remember, is another man's artifice. When Aura declares "We were craftsmen / artful in our own making," he engages in a bit of seemingly innocent wordplay. In fact, he is pointing to the deeply ambivalent nature of art, and to the slipperiness of the term itself which on one hand, indicates the genuine, and on the other, something false and artificial. In the Mexica metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl,* the assumption is that buried deep within us is a single, true face, and with that perception comes the understanding that all roads do not lead a person inevitably to that face. Always savvy, always the trickster, Aura knows that there are many masks but only one true face, and that the process by which we claim it is double-edged, tricky, fraught with slips and dangers of all kinds. In light of that, if we are to master this art of face-making, we must above all else be crafty, for as the Aztecs knew, "the world is slippery."

Nowhere more perhaps than in the ways we carry—or else fail to carry—our hearts: "...you give your heart to one thing after another," an anonymous Nahua poet wrote,

> Carrying it, you do not carry it.
> You destroy your heart on earth.
> Are you not always pursuing things aimlessly?

The lyric is unmistakably a warning which admonishes us not to waste and fritter away this most precious possession, our hearts. In it, as Irene Nicholson explains, appear the following terms from

Nahuatl: *ahuicpa*, which means "to carry something untowardly or without direction," which, of course, automatically implies its opposite, namely that we have the option of carrying that same thing, but with purpose and a clear objective, and in seemly fashion; *itlatiuh*, which translates as "to pursue things aimlessly;" and finally, the onomatopoeic phrase *ahuicpa tic huica* or "carrying you do not carry," which suggests that "the difference between the two ways of carrying our hearts is extremely subtle," and that carrying them "with direction...is a very rare thing requiring the help of a priest who is a mirror, 'a torch and a great flame'." For this anonymous Nahua poet, as for Aura some five centuries later, this making of a true heart (and a corresponding face) is quite possibly the slipperiest of all human endeavors, and then as now, the one real question, the only question worth asking is: How will you carry your heart?

***

Lest an American reader dismiss the Aztec making of the face and heart as esoteric and removed, it should be noted that the concept has edged its way into contemporary U.S. letters in the work of bad girl, border feminist (or more accurately, *mujerista*) Gloria Anzaldua. A *bricoleur* and *juguetona* (a better term than the more understated, dampened English "playful"), like Aura, she has taken up the metaphor in *ixtli* in *yollotl*, and fully conscious of its inherent slipperiness, its polyvalent possibilities (as the title of her recent book—*Making Face, Making Soul:* Haciendo Caras—makes clear), she has underscored the transgressive, subversive dimensions of the term, sticking out her tongue and "making faces." By doing that, Anzaldua links the metaphor on one hand to Moyocoyani, one of the names of the Creator in the Aztec framework, 'the one who reinvents himself/herself,' and on the other, to Adrienne Rich who in her seminal essay, "Blood, Bread, and Poetry: The Location of the Poet" said that one of the functions of women's art would be to show "our true faces—all of them, including the unacceptable."

***

The word "face" enters the English language as a noun and is first recorded in the line *more blod par nas in al is face* dated 1290. The O.E.D. indicates it is derived from the vulgate Latin term *facia*, an altered form of *facies*, meaning figure, form or appearance. The origin of *facies*, however is unknown. Some scholars (the minority) claim that *fa* (meaning to appear or shine as in the Latin word for torch, *facem*) is the root of the word face in English. The majority of linguists seem to favor another word, however, one with a curious link to the Nahua concept of a well-made face—the verb *facere*, which in Latin means to make.

Zeroing in on the constructed, contingent quality of the face—the face as a fabrication—the author of *The Interpretation of Language*, Theodore Thass-Thienemann, insists on the artificial 'making up' implicit in the word face and emphasizes that "like...the Latin super-ficies, 'surface,' it refers to the outer sur-face in contradistinction to the inside essence." While the other proposed root, *fa*, would seem to work against Thass-Thienemann's emphasis on surface, suggesting illumination from within, Terry Landau, author of About Faces, *also stresses the improvised and ever-changing* nature of the face which, in its link to the verb *facere*, suggests that we make our faces to suit a variety of situations.

I know of no one (except Whitman) who has spoken more eloquently of human changeableness than Montaigne who, in "Of Pedantry," wrote this:

> I give my soul now one face, now another, according to which direction I turn it. If I speak of myself in different ways, that is because I look at myself in different ways. All contradictions may by found in me by some twist and in some fashion. Bashful, insolent; chaste, lascivious; talkative, taciturn; tough, delicate; clever, stupid; surly, affable; lying, truthful; learned, ignorant; liberal, miserly, and prodigal: all this I see in myself to some extent according to how I turn; and whoever studies himself really attentively finds in himself, yes, even in his judgment, this gyration and discord. I have nothing to say about myself absolutely, simply, and solidly without confusion and without mixture or in one word.

So in English we make our faces too. But surely all these fluctuating, contingent, made-up, artificial, shifting, volatile, fluid, and impermanent faces cannot possibly be the true and enduring face that Aura or the ancient Nahua poets speak of.

***

Montaigne's statement is remarkable for its accuracy, of course (we sense intuitively that he has said something true about our lives), and also because it uses the vocabulary of the face to describe the never-ending motions of the soul. In his *Aesthetics*, Hegel asserts that the human skin at every point reveals a person's *ensouledness*; if that assertion's true, and if the skin is most particularized and expressive in the region of the face, it follows then that the part of the body that will reveal the soul most fully is a human face. Baudelaire shared this perception—in a prose poem, "Miss Bistoury"—where one character dismisses another as "That monster who wears the blackness of his soul on his face." But if the soul is ever-changing as Montaigne suggests, then the face must change accordingly. T.S. Eliot hinted as much when he wrote: "I must prepare a face to meet / the faces that I meet," lines that clearly refer not to the unchanging face, the *ixtli* one aspires to in Aztec face-making, but to all the improvised, invented faces that we fabricate along the way, which is to say: Eliot is talking about our masks.

In doing that, he leads us to a vexing and seemingly unanswerable question: how do we reconcile our many masks (the face in flux) to the one "true" (stable and permanent) face alluded to in the Aztec concept of *in ixtli in yollotl*? That question is a problem, however, only if we interpret the word "masks" in its very narrowest sense—as false faces: objects we hide behind and which we slap on at whim to prevent others from ever glimpsing our real faces. Seen thus—as a disguise or a masquerade only—Ahab's injunction to "strike through the mask!" or Camille Paglia's description of Alexander Pope as "a man who knows his own place and his own face. There are no masks" make absolute sense. But disguise is not a mask's only function, and as Alejandro Aura has shown, the relationship between our masks and our real faces may be infinitely more subtle and difficult.

For Aura in his little poem states frankly that our masks (and the plural is important here) are not antithetical to the true face, are made in fact "not to conceal / but to coax / our true faces to the surface." One's masks, then, and one's "true face" are conversant with one another and in a close relationship of some sort, but what is it? Clues come from several possible directions.

***

The face is "the most naked, most vulnerable, exposed and significant topography of the body," Gloria Anzaldua says. "O make me a mask!" Dylan Thomas responds. The reflex is understandable, even necessary, but to fixate exclusively on the protective function of our masks as something we hide behind for survival is narrow and reductive, and at least four additional functions can be named.

Citing Jung in his essay "The Separation of East and West," Joseph Campbell writes:

> ...in the living of our lives every one of us is required by his society to play some specific social role. In order to function in the world we are all continually enacting parts... One has to appear in some mask or other if one is to function socially at all; and even those who choose to reject such masks can only put on others representing rejection...It is silly, therefore, to say... "Let's take off our masks and be natural!"

From this perspective, the mask (or more correctly, a succession of masks which we slip on and off as circumstances dictate) is a social tool—a necessity—and inescapable.

By naming their self-protective and their social functions we have pinpointed what might be called the practical, utilitarian uses of masks which in very different ways allow us to maneuver through the world. In a stanza from the Yeats poem referred to earlier, however, we find a new and explicitly spiritual dimension of mask-making:

If I make the lashes dark
And the eyes more bright
And the lips more scarlet,
Or ask if all be right
From mirror after mirror,
No vanity's displayed:
I'm looking for the face I had
Before the world was made.

Here, the mask is neither false nor something we hide behind. Nor is it worn to prevent others from looking us straight in the face. As Yeats conceives of it, the face one had "before the world was made "will be retrieved, reclaimed, remembered, and the mask (an ever-changing work-in-progress, with the lashes now a little darker, the lips now a bit more red) is actually an interim, provisional face, a stand-in of sorts. For we are "molders of our flesh," remember, and on our long trek—back to the original, lost face in Yeats, or toward the true, authentic face in the Aztec metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl*—our masks act as markers or place-holders, and like another invention, the zero, they are indispensable. After all, we cannot wander the world faceless, and until we take possession of our real faces, these ever-changing masks allow us to experiment, to try on and try out a string of alternate, temporary, improvised faces.

So a mask can function—first, as a disguise or kind of armor; second, as a social tool which "greases" our daily interactions, smoothing out even our most ordinary exchanges; and finally, as an interim or provisional face. In the mask's fourth function, we can trace its connection to the authentic Mexica face even further.

In his consideration of dolls and masks, Thass-Thienemann points out that our languages distinguish two kinds of masks: "the oral mask and the ocular...." This is based, he says, on the fact that:

> The words referring to 'mask' indicate that the holes of the mask permitting an in-sight into the true identity—the openings of the mouth and the eyes—appear as characteristic features of the object 'mask'.

In this interpretation, the mask functions as a conduit, a direct link to the face-in-hiding underneath, and far from blocking a connection to the real face (in-sight into the true identity), the mask invites it. In Aura, masks actually call forth the underlying face, inviting it to surface again and show itself; in Thass-Thienemann, the mask extends a similar invitation, but this time in the opposite direction—to an investigation of what is underneath, of depth. Either way, the outcome is revelation.

Earlier I raised two questions: How do we reconcile our many masks to the one true face referred to by the Aztecs? If our masks and our authentic faces are conversant with one another, in close relationship, I asked, what is it? Here, in the mask's ability to reveal as well as to conceal, those two questions are rendered moot. For what by one slant of light is a dualism or contradiction, by another is dissolved, and the terms "mask" and "face" stand not in opposition to one another, but in dialogue. In other words: the face-off becomes a kiss.

(By way of an aside, at least passing mention should be made of the erotic charge in Thass-Thienemann's gloss on the word "mask": in the invitation to go deeper and to penetrate, to see and be seen, and on both sides of the mask, in the desire to merge. What, after all, is the "insight" referred to in the passage but knowledge, both carnal and otherwise? And is it a surprise that this knowledge is attained through two of the most erotically volatile openings in the body—the eyes and the mouth?)

***

Though we have not spoken of it as such, the buried or hidden face implicit in the passage from Thass-Thienemann has been suggested in nearly all the other writing we have looked at so far—in Paz and Aura, in Yeats and the anonymous Mexica poets as well. Closer to home, James Wright in a prose poem from *Moments of the Italian Summer* refers to the work of bringing a man's secret face to light. Indeed, the face-in-hiding (or its corollary, the face-within-a-face) becomes an important leitmotif whenever the subject of masks is taken up. "Yet,"as Joseph Campbell reminds us, "there are masks and [there are] masks."

Some of the most splendid and provocative are the so-called "transformation masks" which Allen Wardell in his book *Objects of Bright Pride,* tells us reached their apogee among the Kwakuitl north of Vancouver Island, near Nootka Sound. Made for use during the winter initiation ceremonies held by the Cannibal Society, Wardell says:

> These masks represent fantastic bird monsters and supernatural beings associated with the man-eating spirit. They are often of large size and made of moveable parts activated by pulling strings so that mouths and eyes can be made to open and close. Fins and

> flippers of sea monster masks would be moved to imitate swimming motions

And the description continues:

> ...the transformation mask...was constructed so that it could be opened up to reveal the face of another animal, human, or supernatural being on its inside...Such masks were worn to illustrate myths of animal ancestry, to display various crests owned by a chief or [to] show the interaction of one spirit with another...The wearer of the mask would move in a certain way when one part of the mask was being displayed and in another when the mask suddenly changed to depict a different form.

Then, quoting from Bill Holm's *Crooked Beak of Heaven*, in a final, telling metaphor, Wardell adds:

> When it is in actual use, "the sudden 'blossoming' of such a mask never fails to draw gasps of amazement from the audience.

The face coaxed forth slowly over a lifetime in the Aztec version of face-and-heart-making, in Kwakuitl masks of the Pacific Northwest, displays itself in an instant of revelation, as a sudden blossoming. The poet James Merrill also understood that the soul flowers on the face, which is why, in his memoir *A Different Person*, describing his own face, he says: "The outward bloom of youth upon my features will fade long before the budlike spirit behind them opens—if," he adds, "it ever does." But whether the face-making is deliberate and slow or instantaneous (now you see it, now you don't), and even if the final outcome is uncertain, in all cases, the task is revelation: to make the face-in-hiding manifest.

One last instance of the hidden or buried face comes to us again from the north, from the poet Gary Snyder who in his book *The Practice of the Wild* explains that while

> [w]e are all capable of extraordinary transformations ...animal-to-human, human-to-animal, animal-to-animal, or even further leaps[, t]he essential nature remains clear and steady...So the animal icons of the Inupiaq people...have a tiny human face sewn into the fur, or under the feathers, or carved on the back or breast or even inside the eye, peeping out. This is the *inua*, which is often called "spirit" but could just as well be termed the "essential nature" of that creature. It remains the same face, regardless of the playful, temporary changes...a panoply of creatures, each with a little hidden human face.

The point is this: far from being lifeless, static things, the transformation masks of the Kwakuitl, like the delightful *inua* among the Inupiaq, remind us finally that change is the one, truly human condition; that our real business is metamorphosis, the making of a soul; that our authentic faces are with us, potentially present, always; and that if we make them our first priority (pampering, coddling, nurturing them the way the Haudenosaunee people oil, bathe, and feed their masks), our true faces—the face-within-a-face—will blossom forth (as Allen Wardell puts it) "one spirit within another, both singing." In their fifth and final function, then, masks act as reminders whose business it is to keep basic spiritual truths in plain sight always.

Isn't this exactly what the Aztec metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl*, is meant to do?

***

The Greek word, *prosopon*, like the English face, stressed outward appearance and beauty, and at times, it could even act as a stand-in for the whole person.

This explains its connection to the word *persona* which "in the beginning...did not mean person," professor of religion David Miller tells us, "but was a synonym for *prosopon*, face." As Thass-Thienemann explains it:

> The Greek *ope* means "opening, hole"; *omna*, from *op-ma*, means "*eye*"; *prosopon* means "face, visage,

> countenance"; *pros-opeion* means "mask." It is a conspicuous phenomenon of many Western languages that they denote the "face" with reference to "seeing" or "eye"...the German Gesicht or...the French visage, and so on. The psychological reason for this identification of "face" and "seeing," however, is not, as generally supposed, that the "look" is most characteristic of the "face," but that the face is considered to be a living ocular mask.

One last definition offered by Campbell indicates that persona means "'mask, false face,' the mask worn by an actor on the Roman stage through which he 'sounded' (per-sonare, 'to sound through)."

What are we to make of this tangle of intersections, cross-references, and borrowings shared by the terms *prosopon*, *prosopeion*, and *persona*? First of all, notice how the term persona was originally synonymous with an individual's face, and by extension, the entire person, for by your faces we shall know you. In Campbell's definition, however, *persona* is linked exclusively to the mask, and it gives no sign of either the face or the person occupying it. Indeed, the term has been gutted, so that it no longer refers to one's person at all, but rather, to one's superficial image, which is why in our contemporary, conventional usage, *persona* has come to mean rather blandly, in Landau's words, "our appearance in the eyes of the world." The term *prosopeion* has shifted too, and in the process, its deep ties (etymological and otherwise) to *prosopon* have been severed and the word has been turned into a synonym not for the face, but for a "false face." Finally, far from being the most significant topography of the body, the face, the *prosopon*, has atrophied into a mask—a living, moving mask, to be sure, but a mask nonetheless.

Put simply: in this etymological shuffle, we've lost our true faces, and in their places, we find ourselves wearing an endless series of ephemeral, often false masks which we exchange indiscriminately, at whim. It is this situation which spurs musician Gary Thomas to title his album *Till We Have Faces*, and James Merrill to imagine in a poem "a face no longer / sought in dreams but worn as my own." For we find ourselves in a kind of limbo in relation to the face—unclear in our definitions of it, uncertain about what our faces mean in our lives, or what our proper attitudes toward them should be.

But as Jung understood, masking—voguing—are insufficient. As Joseph Campbell paraphrases Dr. Jung's thinking:

> ...one has to know how and when to put on and to put off the masks or one's various life roles...But this, finally, is not easy, since some of the masks cut deep. They include judgment and moral values. They include one's pride, ambition, and achievement. They include one's infatuations...The work of individuation, however, [which Campbell defines earlier as living as a released individual] demands that one should not be compulsively affected in this way. The aim of individuation requires that one should find and then learn to live out of one's own center, in control of one's own 'for and against.' And this cannot be achieved by enacting and responding to any general masquerade of fixed roles.

This living out of one's authentic center, one's genuine self (assuming such a center or a self exist, and that we can somehow find them), this choice to step outside what Campbell calls the general masquerade, is what the Aztecs meant by mastering one's face, and it is why, I think, we must pay attention to the metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl*. For as Ezra (9: 7) puts it: "We have been delivered to confusion of face."

And is it any wonder? The Greeks, it seems, also harbored the notion that the face is multiple, and *prosopon* (which in its primary usage meant simply "face, visage, countenance") was used mostly in the plural, even when speaking of a single person.

***

> What is before me in these rags of skin, human skin, human fragments guttered on a metal table...should be as much the subject of poetry as the pooling of a shadow...or the subtle changes in a woman's face.
> —Charles Le Baron , *Gentle Vengeance*

If the primacy—indeed the sacredness—of the human face requires proof, we need only look to students of gross human anatomy who, when dissecting a human cadaver, proceed as follows. First, the thorax is broken open. Organs are studied, bones measured, muscle weighed, the shape, size, color, texture of each part all scrupulously recorded, irregularities set down, abnormalities noted. These students of the human body move with remarkable detachment, systematically, from the thorax to the pelvis, from the pelvic region to the neck and head, and finally to the extremities, their objectivity and scientific remove unwavering throughout.

But the most distinctive and particularized parts of the body—the most insistently human ones: the face and (sometimes—poignantly—) the hands—are kept covered for as long as possible. Because even after they've become intimate with gristle and gut, and have investigated, probed, and factored every last millimeter of the cadaver assigned to them, anatomists are often stunned when that cadaver's face is revealed. If all the body's other parts can be consigned to the safer, more removed categories body, corpse, cadaver, the face—even long-dead—is inextricably connected to the person. Put another way: humanness is rooted in the face.

That fact leads transplant surgeon, Dr. Frank Szmalc, to say during organ procurement operations, "I tend not to look at the face because, for me, it's still one of the embodiments of who that person was...[the cadaver] is a dead human being, but it still has a meaning and a sense." And that meaning coheres most markedly in the face.

If as sacred objects, human beings are subject to slights and profanation, as sociologist Irving Goffman maintains, the face of all the body's parts is arguably the most susceptible to harm and insult. The most extreme form of profanation (read defacement) is outright disfigurement, of course, and our ambivalence, our repulsion, before that act is profound as the following fragment from a poem on the dissection experience entitled "Disclosure" illustrates:

> The day I cut into your face
> I didn't know how deep to go.
> The muscles there—that let you smile
> or face your dread with the common
> look of horror—they're only skin deep.
> Their names are not important. I learned
> the names and followed every branch

of every deeper nerve and vein,
but I do not know your name.
—Sally Harris Sange

From the first two lines on, the dissonance triggered by the experience is clear: the demands of an objective scientist—a medical student trained to clinical rigor and detachment—contradict the visceral responses of a fully-sentient, flesh-and-blood woman. So we can pry and probe, locate, list, describe, name, categorize, index, tag, and disassemble all its constituent parts, "follow every branch / of every deeper nerve and vein," but still the face insists: we are more than just the sum of our parts.

Intuiting all this, the Mexica priests and poets made the face an emblem of the soul.

***

We cannot walk faceless in the world because to do so is to have no identity. The O.E.D. tells us this and so do the Zapatistas of Chiapas in southern Mexico who, like their elusive and enigmatic leader the "Sub-comandante" Marcos, repeatedly refer to themselves as "the dead of hunger, the ones with no name...with no face." To be anonymous by choice is one thing; to have one's face blanked out is something else altogether. For to be rendered faceless is to be counted null and void: invisible Ralph Ellison (and DuBois and Baldwin and Malcolm X) called it, which is to say, not counted at all. Because to wander faceless in the world is to be cut off from the living. In short, it is to be exiled. This explains why Parkinson's disease is often referred to as masked face syndrome which, according to Landau, "affects the basal ganglia in the brain...robs the face of all expression,"—what the poet Luis Cernuda calls its "eloquence"—"and in its place, leaves a pronounced form of emotional deadness."

From both real-life and fictional characters, we learn of the nearly unbearable suffering brought on by the actual physical loss of the face. By its absence, we learn too just how much a face means. Lucy Grealy, author of *Autobiography of a Face*, after losing half a jaw to cancer says: "The journey back to my face was a long one." The understatement, which is extreme, underscores the arduousness of that journey, which was equally extreme.

As the late Nobel Laureate, Joseph Brodsky once said: "One gropes always for a face..." Literally in the case of prosopagnosics, metaphorically as we shall see presently in a second poem by Alejandro Aura.

***

As neuroscientist, Dr. Dennis Stelzner tells it, the superior temporal sulcus, an area of the brain's temporal lobe measuring several millimeters square, has a single, hyper-refined task: to recognize complex configurations, one of the most intricate of which is the human face

Trauma to this portion of the brain (what are sometimes called the "face cells") can lead in rare instances to a syndrome called prosopagnosia. Identified and named by French neurologists in the 19th century, prosopagnosia (defined broadly as "not knowing people") is more specifically a clinical condition whereby individuals lose the ability to recognize human faces. As we saw earlier in the terms *prosopon* and *persona*, here again personhood is linked inextricably to the face. "To prosopagnosics," Landau explains:

> faces may look like a cubist Picasso portrait, or may appear to have features in the wrong position, or the face may be so fuzzy it is beyond recognition...

According to the late Dr. Norman Geschwind, an expert on this rare syndrome, what is most remarkable about this disorder is its specificity Generally, it is accompanied by few other neurological symptoms. Most mental tasks, including those that require processing of visual information, are accomplished without much difficulty. A patient can usually read and correctly name seen objects. What he or she cannot do is look at a person or at a photograph of a face and name the person. It is not the identity of familiar people that has been lost...only the connection between the face and identity. Dr. Geschwind pointed out, "When a familiar person speaks, the patient knows the voice and can say the name immediately. The perception of the facial features also seems unimpaired, as the patient can often describe the face in detail and can usually match a photograph made from the front with a profile of the same person. The deficiency seems to be confined to forming associations between faces and identities."

And finally, most wrenchingly:

> ...in some cases, the impairment is so severe that prosopagnosics are unable to recognize their own faces in a mirror.

These people, every bit as much as Grealy, have been exiled from their faces.

But what is manifested physiologically, dramatically, in prosopagnosics, for Alejandro Aura is the standard human condition:

> We were servile and imprudent,
> our pride a worthless thing,
> because the mold that shaped us
> was cut from husks of mud.
> Any who walked empty-handed
> possessed no face or heart.
> And in the world,
> those of us in this deplorable state
> numbered in the many millions.

The situation outlined here is bleak: first off, we are servile, wormlike; as such, we are relegated to the earth—not in its positive dimension (as the site of groundedness, for example), but to mud and slime. For as both Aura and the Aztecs know, the earth is a slippery place, and if you do not step carefully, you end up in *zan ticamatlapul, in zan tixtlapul*: your mouth in the earth, your face in the mud. With that as our base reality, all posturing (our pride) is a worthless thing and our efforts all in vain. We are imprudent, Aura says, implying that we are careless somehow, but of what?

Of this simply: we have ignored the making of our true faces and our hearts, and having failed in that task, which is our most urgent business, dispossessed of *ixtli* and of *yollotl*, we walk the world empty-handed. For as a Nahua poet showed us earlier: "You give your heart to one thing after another / Carrying it, you do not carry it." By Aura's reckoning, those of us in this deplorable state numbered in the many millions, all of us roaming the world aimlessly—*ahuicpa*, without direction—no face, no heart, no soul. As Aura sees it, then, in contrast to the singer of the Old Testament, our lines have by no means fallen unto pleasant places.

***

But Alejandro Aura is never merely (or exclusively) bleak, and the second half of the poem goes like this:

> But from time to time,
> in the shadow of our sadness,
> a dust rose up
> which worked its way into our lungs
> and made us sing.
> And breathing in this shaking earth
> the person in us came to life,
> and our eyes,
> miraculous,
> scaled the heights
> of dialogue
> to
> You.

I have presented Mr. Aura's poem in two parts to underscore its very simple but effective structure. Divided into almost equal halves, the poem lays out its dilemma in the first section and seeks to resolve it in the second: exposition/ resolution, like a logical proposition or a little Mozart fugue. Turning on the simple word but, the poem's second half makes it clear that facelessness of the empty-handed sort is NOT our only option. The alternative is an occasional, a rare thing, to be sure, but from time to time we do achieve it, and we do so in the shadow of our sadness.

If we recall the *ihiyotl*, the sinister portion of the Aztec soul, and the animal alter ego, the *nagual*, associated with it, and if we are correct in connecting both of those to Jung's version of the shadow, then Aura's line becomes provocative in the extreme. For even sadness has its nagual or its shadow, which by its very presence, suggests its opposites: happiness and fulfillment.

"A dust rose up," Mr. Aura writes:

> which worked its way into our lungs
> and made us sing.
> And breathing in this shaking earth,
> the person in us came to life...

No doubt, one of the very greatest pleasures of reading Alejandro Aura is that his work is funky, hip, improvisational on one hand, and on the other, mindful of tradition, of Nahua tradition in particular. In this fragment, for instance, the line "a dust rose up" could refer to at least two things in Aztec culture. First, sudden swirls of dust spotted on the road were believed to be the souls of the dead returning to the earth in search of food and kin. A whirlwind of dust is also a standard Aztec metaphor for war, the idea being that battle churned the earth and drove up the dust. Understood from this perspective, Aura's simple observation that a dust rose up, is in fact a direct descendent of the metaphor the dust, the dust whirls taken from a Classic Aztec song to the war god, Huitzilopochtli. But what does it mean in this context:

> a dust rose up
> which worked its way into our lungs
> and made us sing?

That the swirling dust is a reference to the divine is obvious, but why is the language of the battlefield applied to the making of a song?

Because, quite simply, for the Mexica people, the making of a song, like the making of a face and heart, was arduous, a battle, even warlike perhaps. And whether we are dealing with Keats or one of the Classical Mexica poets, the vision is an agonistic one, remember, and to make a soul in either case requires a "World of Pains and troubles." Which is why the rising dust (a sign among the Aztecs that the gods are present as well as a metaphor for battle) works its way with effort into our lungs and, almost in spite of ourselves, makes us sing.

The next lines, likewise, include allusions to several Nahua concepts. The emphasis on breath can certainly be read as a reference to the tonalli, that part of the soul which, as we've seen, was equated with heat, the sun, the breath, that spark of life that animated man and the universe. Then too, what is this shaking earth in the poem if not *ollin*, the principle of movement so central to the Aztec world-view? And finally, when Aura writes "the person in us came to life," he not referring again directly to the metaphor in *ixtli in yollotl* which Birgitta Leander translates as simply personality?

As these examples show, Aura resuscitates ideas, images, and metaphors from Mexica tradition and re-invests them with contemporary meaning. In this one poem (and frequently—in Aura's early work, especially) pre-Cortesian Mexico merges with end-of-the-millennium post-modernism, and out of that mix, elements of Nahua poetry and thought become viable again, which is to say: Aura makes them new.

Then, with our hearts and faces fully wakened, the poem ends:

and our eyes,
miraculous,
scaled the heights
of dialogue
to
You.

Whatever one might think of the final loop this poem makes—of its sudden abstractions, its idiosyncratic line breaks, or its overt references to dialogics and the miraculous—its sweep is nonetheless impressive. For in twenty-two short lines, we have been lifted up from mud to God.

"Among the Aztecs," Leander tells us, "poetry was first and foremost a vehicle...for entering into contact with the gods." Here, obviously, this is Aura's purpose too, and so the poem is, appropriately, a prayer—not of supplication ("Holy Mary, Mother of God...") or contrition ("O my God, I am heartily sorry..."), or even rage of the sort we see in Job ("How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?"), but of simple, unmitigated praise. This explains its use of the communal we—a standard feature of prayers whose main objective is to praise or give thanks—and also its emphasis on humility: "We were servile," the poem tells us, "...our pride a worthless thing." From the outset, the poem asks: What is our proper relationship to the divine? And the answer comes back to us: Humility. For only when we are empty-handed, dispossessed of both face and heart, can this animating dust work its way into our lungs and make us sing. In other words, an act of divine intervention—of grace—is only possible when we have been duly humbled. Only then will we scale "the heights / of dialogue / to / You."

Our right relationship to God, then, is an on-going conversation which moves us from we (the opening word of the poem) to You (its final word). Here, Aura keeps close company with Bakhtin and, of course, Martin Buber, but in his version, the dialogue is unmistakably Aztec. For what's enacted by the end of the poem is this: the divine spark (the tonalli portion of the soul) proceeds from and is carried back to its source. In other words, the individual spark in each human being is in dialogue with the force that animates the entire universe. This communication with the divine is possible, however, only when the person in us comes to life; and that can happen only when we have completed the process pointed to in the metaphor *in ixtli in yollotl*. Put otherwise: in the making of our face and heart is God.

***

> ...in a dense mystic treatise...Plutarch grappled with the religious import of the word E'i inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi. In Greek it can mean 'Five'; it can mean 'If': but above all it means 'Thou Art'. As such it declares that God has eternal Being. He is the eternal THOU to our transient I. Each individual human being is relative, contingent, impermanent. But each 'I' can know itself; it can know Man through itself; and it can stretch out to Reality and say THOU ART.
>
> In doing so, it recognizes God.
>
> —M.A. Screech

***

When the time comes to you at which you will be forced at last to utter the speech which has lain at the center of your soul for years, which you have, all that time, idiot-like been saying over and over, you'll not talk about joy of words. I saw tell why the Gods do not speak to us openly, nor let us answer. Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean? How can they meet us face to face till we have faces?

—C.S. Lewis

***

Inter & Outer Rhyme
Last night was the nightest
The moon full-mooned a starless space
Sure as the snow beneath snow is the whitest
Shall the god surface the human face.
—Gregory Corso

***

There are seven steps to heaven,
and enlightenment stares me in the face
every morning when I shave.
—Garrett Hongo

***

mirror facing a mirror
nowhere else
—Ikkyu

Works Cited

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Making Face, Making Soul:* Haciendo Caras. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation Books, 1990.

Aura, Alejandro. *Cinco Veces*. Mexico City: SEP/El Nigromante, 1989.

Berg, Stephen. *Crow with No Mouth*: Ikkyu. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 1989.

Campbell, Joseph. *Myths to Live By*. NY: Bantam Books, 1972.

Castellanos, Rosario. *Poesía No Eres Tú*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Mexicana, 1972.

Cole, Jonathan. *About Face*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998.

Corso, Gregory. *Mindfield: New & Selected Poems*. NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1989.

The Dissection Experience. Videocassette #PR94-43-a. "Medicine & Society" course, SUNY Health Science Center Medical School, Syracuse, NY. No date.

Eliot, T.S. *Collected Poems 1909-1962*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1963.

Elkins, James. *The Object Stares Back*: On the Nature of Seeing. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Furst, Jill Leslie McKeever. *The Natural History of the Soul in Ancient Mexico*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
Grealy, Lucy. *Autobiography of a Face*. NY: HarperPerennial, 1995.

Hegel. Aesthetics: *Lectures on Fine Art*. Oxford: Clarendon

Press, 1975.

Keats, John. *Letters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Landau, Terry. *About Faces: The Evolution of the Human Face.* NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1989.

Leander, Birgitta. In *Xochitl in Cuicatl—Flor y Canto: La Poesía de los Aztecas*. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1981.

León-Portilla, Miguel. *Los Antiguos Mexicanos*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961.

Lewis, C.S. *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Re-told*. Grand Rapids: Eardmans, 1956.

Merrill, James. *A Different Person: A Memoir*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

Miller, David L. *Three Faces of God: Traces of the Trinity in Literature and Life*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Montaigne, Michel de. *The Complete Essays*. London: Penguin Books, 1987.

Nicholson, Irene. *A Guide to Mexican Poetry Ancient and Modern. Mexico City*: Editorial Minutiae, 1968.

Rich, Adrienne. *Blood, Bread, and Poetry:* Selected Prose, 1979-1985. NY: Norton, 1986.

Snyder, Gary. *The Practice of the Wild*. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990.

Sullivan, Thelma D. *A Scattering of Jades*: Stories, Poems, and Prayers of the Aztecs. NY:Simon & Schuster, 1994.

Thass-Thienemann, Theodore. *The Interpretation of Language,* *vol. II: Understanding the Symbolic Meaning of Language*. NY: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1973.

Wardell, Allen. *Objects of Bright Pride*: Northwest Coast Indian Art from the American Museum of Natural History. NY: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1978.

Wright, James. *Moments of the Italian Summer*. Washington, D.C.: Dryad Press, 1976.

Yeats, William Butler. *The Poems of W.B. Yeats*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1983.

Image as Text in Post-Contact Mexican Books and Artifacts of Indigenous Origin

George L. Scheper

This paper explores and complicates a proposed contrast between Pre-Columbian uses of visual images as autochthonous bearers of historic/mythic information, on the one hand, with, on the other, European Renaissance traditions of visual images as illustrative adjuncts to written texts. This contrast is a useful starting point for exploring the indigenous/European cultural encounters, because pre-contact Amerindian cultures generally did, and in some contexts still do, utilize visual imagery as primary texts, so laden with information that they serve as prompters for ceremonial oral recitation, as in the case of Navajo sandpaintings, whose iconography prompts the oral chants that subsequently have been compiled and written down as "the Navajo Creation epic," *Diné bihane'*. Similarly, in 16th century Mexico, the Franciscan missionary Bernardino de Sahagún reported that when he began to collect ethnographic information from Nahua elders about their history, customs and beliefs, they answered him "in pictures. . . [as] that was the writing they employed in ancient times," and that his young indigenous assistants, literate in Spanish, Latin and alphabetized Nahuatl, then explicated them by "writing the explanations at the bottom of the painting" (Sahagún 1: 54).

Several scholars have recently suggested that not only post-contact indigenous texts, but pre-Columbian pictorial manuscripts, as well, should be regarded not just as picture-books, but as something closer to scripts (Boone "Aztec Pictorial Histories" 71) or musical scores (King "Hearing the Echoes" 115), as works designed to be "performed," rather than silently and wordlessly perused. Reviewing this shift in understanding of pre-Columbian codices as performance texts, Monaghan cautions, "But if we are now coming to the realization that these texts cannot be understood apart from their performance, the focus on song and chant betrays our logocentricity" (89) — because "dance," movement, and gesture are as deeply encoded in them as words.

This seeming inversion of the European picture/text relationship applies even in the case of Maya inscribed stelae where a central image is typically surrounded by a glyphic text; such texts are now largely readable, with the discovery that the glyphs encode a mixed phonetic/ideographic writing system, but the large central image, rather than simply illustrating this written text, is itself a kind of "verb," encoding the central action.

These New World indigenous systems of relating text and visual image sat uneasily with the usual Renaissance European privileging of text over image— the relegation of image to illustration (although this would not have been as true of older medieval traditions of iconography). Thus, during the processes of colonization and missionizing, when indigenous oral traditions were transposed into alphabetized writing, the transposition was only partly successful, to varying degrees, as Klor de Alva and Mignolo, for instance, have shown.

The Columbian Quincentennial of 1992 occassioned an outpouring of critical studies and commentaries on the "encounter" (read "intrusion/invasion") of the European cultures and the indigenous cultures of the so-called New World in the 16th century. This inter-cultural "encounter," unprecedented in scope, intensity and sustained impact, this intimate grappling, of European Renaissance cultures with a whole array of indigenous cultures almost wholly unimpacted by Europe before 1492, surely constitutes one of the most extraordinary epics of intercultural contact in human history. As Gruzinski has said, "This led to an experiment unique to the sixteenth century: the Renaissance arts of sculpture, architecture and painting entered into a dialogue with traditions that had been cultivated by pre-Columbian civilizations for millenia. This astonishing experiment in coexistence [*sic*] between European and native worlds raised countless questions in addition to the basic issue of artistic creativity, for it challenged the very foundation of Mexican civilization. . . . in the face of culture shock" (8, 12).

This, of course, is a remarkably genteel way to put it. The fact that within two or three generations the indigenous population of the impacted territories suffered something like an 80 to 90% decimation of population through the combined effects of disease, enforced living and labor conditions and outright conflict, punctuates a human catastrophe of almost unimaginable proportions (as Todorov provocatively put it, "we are speaking of a population

72

diminution estimated at 70 million human lives. None of the great massacres of the twentieth century can be compared to this hecatomb" [133]). In consequence, most European, Latin American and North American academics writing in the context of the Quincentennial have made it their project to deconstruct and de-center the story of the "encounter," to shift from a Euro-centric story of conquest and conversion to presumptive Indigenous-centered stories of defeat and victimization and, especially, of resistance and subversion. Not surprisingly, these projects have proven more elusive than anyone perhaps at first imagined, as the various indigenous testimonies, as they have been made available from an increasing body of edited and translated texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in Nahuatl, have not always suited the ideological premises of the academics and consequently have had to be subjected to increasingly tortuous reinterpretations to fit the Procrustean bed of ideology and "discourse theory." (For examples of how the raw textual material fails to fit the expected paradigms, see the various collections of Nahuatl documents assembled and translated by James Lockhart and his collaborators, and recent studies of Nahuatl *titulos* by Stephanie Wood, and of sixteenth century Nahuatl Christian texts by Louise Burkhart.)

At any rate, not content to let the history of conquest and colonization be told exclusively in terms of political, social and ecclesiastical dominance alone, critics such as Mignolo, Adorno, Rabasa and Klor de Alva have sought to analyze the story of colonization and resistance in terms of discourse and counter-discourse, at the bedrock of communication (see, for instance, the special issue of *Dispositio* on "Colonial Discourse" [vol. XIV, nos. 36-38, 1989], edited by Adorno and Mignolo). An assumption underlying some of the theorizing about the New World encounters is that the process pitted literate European against illiterate Indigenous populations. As stated most baldly by Todorov in his widely read *The Conquest of America*, "The absence of writing is an important element of the situation, perhaps even the most important. Stylized drawings, the pictograms used among the Aztecs, are not a lesser degree of writing: they note the experience, not the language." Todorov goes on to argue how "the absence of writing is revelatory of [what he calls] symbolic behavior in general, and at the same time of the capacity to perceive the other." Todorov continues: "The three great

Amerindian civilizations encountered by the Spaniards are nor located on precisely the same level of the evolution of writing. The Incas are the most unfamiliar with writing (they possess a mnemotechnical use of braided cords, moreover one that is highly elaborated); the Aztecs have pictograms; among the Maya we find certain rudiments of phonetic writing." He goes on to parallel this gradation of literacy with a "comparable gradation in the intensity of the belief that the Spaniards are gods" — the Incas doing so most firmly, the Maya the least (80-81).

Todorov's long-outdated small concession that the Maya may have achieved the "rudiments of phonetic writing" does not soften the contrast he wishes to ride hard as his centeral thesis: that the Indigenous/ Spanish encounters pitted literacy against illiteracy and "paradigm" against "syntagm," pitted deterministic and collectivist oral cultures bound by rigidified "prophetic" tradition against an empiricist, improvisitory culture well able to adjust to, adapt to, and exploit rapidly changing circumstances (87), an analysis not all that different, after all, despite the trendy rhetoric, from Prescott's, a century and a half ago, in *The Conquest of Mexico*. Similarly, Mignolo (1989) spoke rather grandly of the colonists' assumption of "literacy as a state of grace" (60) and of the "tyranny of the alphabet" (53), as colonial and missionary discourse was put to the business of legitimization of the conquest. From this perspective, the most successful colonial project of all was the introduction of the European alphabetic system for writing down native speech, thus supplying the fundamental technology for the intellectual colonization of the native subject (and of course it is pertinent to recall here how the Bishop of Avila had explained to Isabella upon presenting her with a copy of a 1492 Spanish grammar, the first in any European language, that this was "the perfect instrument of empire" [Elliott 125]).

Understandably, many of the early missionaries had something of the same perception of the Amerindians' illiteracy; for instance, Valadés, in his *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579) described how the Indians of Mexico, when they needed to record anything, depended on a kind of hieroglyphic system:

> Moreover, an admirable example of this [artificial memory] exists in the commercial activities and contracts of the Indians. As they are unlettered as we

> have mentioned above, they make their will known to each other through certain forms and images which they are accustomed to place on panels of silk and paper sheets made from the leaves of trees. This custom in the reckoning of their accounts continues to this present day, not only among those ignorant of how to read and write but also among those capable of reading and writing correctly.
> (Watts 419)

Comparing the Indian pictographic system to his understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions, Valadés expresses astonishment at how much the Indians manage to communicate through pictures:

> When our western Indians do business they employ certain figures in this manner. They may dispute among themselves for an entire hour, seated on their heels with their whole body bent downwards which is their way of sitting. . . . And they used figures in the same way instead of writing in transmitting agreements with other peoples and in recording significant events and in governing themselves. . . . Is it not astonishing that anything in the natural universe whether it is perceived by the senses or the intellect can be converted to that usage so that it is certain in the way that words signify. (Watts 420)

Walter Mignolo (1992) notes how in the following century, the Inca writer Garcilaso de la Vega similarly wondered how his own people had kept any history as they did not have writing. Mignolo imagines that for Garcilaso, "whose work," he says, "reflects the tensions between the organization and transmission of the culture of his ancestors and the ideas of writing and of the book of the European Renaissance. . . . The question was finally formulated more or less as follows: Since you (the Inka) do not have books, what memories do you have of your past? A beautiful example indeed," Mignolo adds, "of diatopical hermeneutics in which the narrative first person avoids identifying itself with either they or you. the identification occurs, however, not in the pronominal form but in the natural complicity between the object (the book) and the actions (recording the past)" (320-21).

At any rate, herein lay the fundamental difficulty that the missionaries foresaw for the successful prosecution of their project, the language/literacy barrier, or "wall" as Jacopo da Testera called it (Watts 405). Thus the first-generation missionary to Mexico, Pedro de Gante, underscored the friars' difficulties in communicating with and evangelizing natives who were "people without writing, without letters, without written characters and without any kind of enlightenment" (Mignolo [1989] 66). Hence the importance placed by missionaries upon campaigns of forced instruction in language and literacy imposed on masses of select Indian children, as reported by de Gante and others (Ibid. 67). The same missionary necessity set the first generations of friars upon their pioneering studies of indigenous languages, programs of study leading, for instance, to Bishop Landa's famous attempt to construe a "Maya alphabet" (see fig 1). Landa's bold stroke was noted, until recently, as an abortive folly, but many missionaries, including Landa, became fluent in the native languages of their regions, producing landmark dictionaries and grammars, such as Juan de Cordova's *Arte del Idioma Zapoteco* (1578). At the same time, the friars established mission schools and seminaries to teach selected native youths the fundamentals of Christianity and the elements of liturgical Latin and Spanish, in that order of priority.

The early methods adopted for evangelization prior to any indigenous literacy in Spanish or Latin were of necessity visual. At first, there was instruction through representational paintings of both secular and sacred subject matter (two engravings in Valadés book illustrate this straightforward method); and, then, the use of manuscripts of simplified schematic rebus drawings, each representing a word, phrase or idea in a Christian prayer or catechetical text, but not in themselves language-dependent. These latter documents, referred to as "Testerian catechisms" through their association with Friar Jacobo de Testera (some 35 are known to exist), do not use native pictorial traditions, but in being read horizontally across two facing pages, often in boustrephedon fashion, do bear some resemblance to pre-Columbian screenfold codices. Joseph de Acosta (1589) describes how such texts were used to teach basic Christian prayers such as the *Confiteor*:

> Certainly whoever would see it, would admire it. For to signify the words, "I a sinner, do confess myself," they paint an Indian kneeling at the feet of a religious

> [pries], as one who confesses. For "to God almighty" they paint three faces with crowns like the Trinity; for the glorious Virgin Mary they paint the face of Our Lady and half the body of a child [etc]. . . . From this one may conceive the liveliness of the Indians. . . . [s]ince this method of writing our prayers and matters of the faith was not taught them by the Spaniards. (Glass 284; [cf. fig. 2, from a Testerian Creed])

Acosta says he saw the same device for making confession in Peru, and Motolinía (1541) describes hearing confessions this way in Cholula, where so many came to be confessed, he says, that he told them "'I shall confess only those who bring their sins written down in pictures.' This is a thing that they know and understand, for that was their way of writing. . . . They pointed out the symbols with a straw, and I, with another, assisted them. In this way there was time to hear many confessions, for they expressed them-selves so well in symbols and characters that I had to ask them only very little more than what they had written or depicted"(146).

Another early approach involved sheer imitation of appropriate body language and speech acts for Christian worship. The method was to generate phonetic imitation of the correct liturgical speech acts by using traditional rebus images of objects whose Nahuatl pronunciation could simulate the desired Christian expression. Las Casas, in his *Apologetic History* (1555) gives one example, as paraphrased by Glass: "To represent the word amen, the natives drew the sign for water (*atl*) followed by the sign for the maguey plant (*metl*) which together (*a-metl*) approximated the word. Las Casas had seen a great part of the Christian doctrine drawn in this manner which could be read by the Indians just as he could read European writing" (283). Another example, for *Pater noster*, is given by Mendieta (1596): "The word which they [the Indians] possess which is closest in pronunciation to *Pater* is *pantli* which signifies a little flag with which they count the number twenty. . . For the word *noster*, the word which they have which is the closest is *nochtli*, which is the name of the cactus which here the Spanish call the tuna cactus and in Spain the cactus of the Indies. . . . So, in order to bring to mind the word *noster*, they paint next to the little flag a tuna [cactus], which [the Indians] call *nochtli*, and in this manner the speech proceeds to its completion" (Watts 428).

One can only imagine the cacophany such a method was likely to have produced, and with how little comprehension. Not surprisingly, the friars gradually developed more sophisticated techniques based on their study of the indigenous languages. Their tool would be the alphabet, turned to the purposes of representing Nahuatl speech, and thus converting a hieroglyphic system into a lettered one. Valadés saw that there were two different methods for teaching natives the alphabet: "Images are to be invented for the sound of the voice, or of letters, or syllables, or speech. If [they are] of letters, then in two different ways, either through the figural similarity to the letters themselves through common usage, or through the resonance of the voice whence we assume the image of the first letter from the name of some real or imaginary animal" (Watts 425). That is, one could produce a rebus alphabet in which the shapes of the letters are taught through resemblance to various objects (e.g., "A" to a compass or a ladder, "C" to a horseshoe, etc.), or a phonetic alphabet correlating letters to indigenous images that in part convey the sound value of that letter (see figs. 3 & 4, from Valadés).

Eventually the missionaries achieved an extraordinarily sophisticated educational system, culminating in the Colegio de Santa Cruz at Tlatelolco on the outskirts of Mexico City, where indigenous seminarians were exposed to an advanced classical and Christian "core curriculum" and achieved literacy in Spanish, Latin and in alphabetized or "missionary" Nahuatl. These were the trilingual *grammaticos* who collaborated with Sahagún in his monumental *History of the Things of New Spain*, the pioneer work of New World ethnography. As earlier noted, this educational experiment eventually bore fruit in a whole canon of Nahua literature in which indigenous and *mestizo* writers of the colonial period produced texts that served severally their individual, familial and local interests. In the Maya region there remained more of a dichotomy between Spanish and indigenous cultures, so that instead of anything comparable to the colonial Nahua texts of central Mexico, what the alphabetization of Maya eventually produced was the very different tradition of the prophetic books of the *Chilam Balam*, as well as the unique manuscript of the Maya epic, the *Popol Vuh*.

The result of this missionary campaign of literacy in the New World was, as Mignolo (1989) concludes, a broad spectrum of consequences:

> At one end of the spectrum we have the meeting between Charles V and the men of letters, and the friars' program to alphabetize the natives. At the other end we witness the uses of writing by natives in order to preserve and transmit what had until then been kept in memory and transmitted orally, as well as to interpret in alphabetic writing what had until then been recorded in painted images and interpreted orally. In the middle, so to speak, is Garcilaso who will fully embrace Western literacy in order to criticize the colonizer; and Guaman Poma who will use Western literacy in order to resist it... . The fact remains that alphabetic writing used for purposes beyond the intention of those who planned and programmed the alphabetization of the colonized, as well as the silence to which which the "illiterate" are reduced, reveal one of the major communicative paradoxes of a colonial situation. (71-2)

In light of the above general remarks about the colonial/missionary project to establish and control communication with the native populations of the New World, it will be of interest to reconsider the whole question of indigenous literacy and the relative roles of image and text in both pre-Columbian and post-contact indigenous texts, in light of recent scholarship. To begin with, the fundamental premise that underlay accounts of the encounter/conquest, from Prescott to Todorov, the premise that this was an encounter of literate with fundamentally illiterate cultures, needs to be questioned. We alluded above to Todorov's "small concession that the Maya may have achieved the 'rudiments of phonetic writing.'" But now it is definitely established that the Mayan so-called "hieroglyphs" represent a fully developed written language, incorporating a combination of symbolic, semantic and phonetic elements remarkably similar to the logographic Japanese system (Coe 32-3). In *Breaking the Maya Code* Coe retells the fascinating story of the decipherment of Mayan script, not the least of the difficulties of which involved the decoders having to overcome the extremely deep-rooted prejudices of Mayanists themselves against the idea that the inscriptions embodied a fully readable written language. Thus, a scholar as recent as Harris (in *The Origin of Writing*, 1986) continues to poke fun at Landa's attempt to construe a Maya alphabet (see fig. 1), observing that "Landa's Maya alphabet stands as a kind of permanent folly in the history of linguistics. What it reveals is the depths of incomprehension which centuries of alphabetic culture can inculcate about the nature of writing" (45), a judgment approvingly repeated by Mignolo (1989: 54). But now it turns out that Landa, for all his misunderstandings, was as close to a Rosetta Stone as was needed to move forward on decipherment after all. So now the Maya join the company of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley and China as pristine inventors of literacy. As Schele and Freidel argue in *A Forest of Kings* (1990), now "we can offer a history unique in the Precolumbian Americas, populated with real people, replete with the drama of battle, palace intrigue, heroic tragedy, and magnificent personal and artistic and intellectual expression" (18). It is now known, for instance from excavations at Copán, Honduras, that scribes were very high officials indeed, as in Egypt, and that perhaps it was a role adopted by brothers of rulers (see Fash, 111, 120; and Coe, *The Maya Scribe and His World*).

A typical Maya artifact, such as Panel 1 from Lacanja now at Dumbarton Oaks (see fig. 5) features a central figure seated and holding a two-headed horizontal bar; along with elaborations of the central figure's costuming, including an elaborate headdress, and the similarly elaborate headdresses on each of the heads attached to the bar, there are several columns of glyphs that appear to be vertically organized; in fact they are organized in vertical pairs of columns, which are read across the pair, starting at the top and working down, and proceeding from left to right along the panel. The glyphs look to be a combination of fairly representational pictures (such as heads) along with more abstract-looking symbols, but this appearance is deceptive, because the representational elements, which can indeed sometimes mean what they look like, can also stand for numbers, and can also function as phonetic elements. Similarly, the central figure is not really just a "portrait" of an important personage (though individual features are definitely recognizable in Maya representations), but rather the action represented is in a sense part of the text, to be "read" as something like "ritually instituted a new year" or "assumed authority" or "ritually let blood"—as in such other

Maya text/image compositions as the royal accession panels on the Temples of the Sun, the Cross and the Foliated Cross at Palenque (see figures 6, 7 & 8) or Lady Xoc's bloodletting image on the panel from Yaxchilan now in the British Museum (see fig. 9). In *A Forest of Kings*, Schele and Freidel demonstrated how specific dynastic events are recorded in these panels by means of a system of interdependent glyphic inscriptions and pictorial iconography. The panels of the Cross group at Palenque record the accession of the forty-eight year old Chan Bahlum on 10 January 690, 132 days after the death of his father Pacal (237-43); lintel 24 from Yaxchilan records Lady Xoc's blood-letting ritual, as her husband Shield-Jaguar holds a torch, celebrating the birth of Bird-Jaguar on 28 October 709 (266-68).

In addition to these monumental inscriptions, of course, there are the small number of surviving pre-Columbian Maya codices (the Dresden, Paris and Madrid—and the Grolier, if it is authentic), which are more of a ritual than a historical character. But with the realization that the rich trove of painted Maya ceramic vases include many in what has been aptly called "codex style," the range of readable Maya artifacts has vastly expanded, insofar as much of the vase imagery can be usefully parallelled with narrative elements of the *Popol Vuh*. There is widespread testimony that individual mythic images in Mesoamerica were not "illustrations" to a text but rather that contem-plation of the image prompted recitation of an oral text —as in the case, for instance, of Navajo sandpaintings, which, in the course of a healing chant, would prompt recitation of some component of the Navajo "epic" *Diné bahane'*, or as contemplation of a caribou hide painted with a Winter Count would prompt a recitation of Lakota nation history.

It is now also clear that the Maya were not the sole possessors of a writing system in the New World, although it is the one closest to our familiar notions of writing in terms of the relation of image and text. For convenience, I cite Joyce Marcus' succinct five-indicators of a writing system: it has a recognizable format; usually its format is linear, occurring in columns or rows; it reads systematically either horizontally or vertically; there is some degree of relationship to a specific spoken language; and it has a limited set of conventionalized signs that combine according to specific rules, i.e., a grammar [38-39]. Clearly it is the different image/text relationship of New World writing systems that has impeded our understanding of them. The Maya system is sufficiently text-based to have now passed muster. Other systems, being more preponderantly image-based, have as yet not.

The Mixtecs of the Oaxaca area are increasingly referenced as having writing—indeed, they were either the most prodigious producers of pre-Columbian codices, or by some stroke of fortune, far more of theirs have survived than those of any other Mesoamerican culture: seven are definitely listed as Mixtec, and another six, the Borgia-group, might be from the neighboring Puebla/Tlaxcalan area or, indeed, might be Mixtec. One category of these codices is the *tonalamatl*, a sort of ritual divining book keyed to the sacred 260-day calendar, and is therefore largely calendric, numerological and astronomical.

But other Mixtec codices are now recognized as historical/geneological narratives; of these the most familiar (not least because of its accessibility as a Dover paperback) is the so-called Codex Nuttall, featuring episodes in the life of a figure named 8-Deer Tiger-Claw. The reading of the pages of imagery proceeds in the familiar boustrophedon pattern, the path of reading being guided by distinct red lines that mark the route as through a maze. Alberto Caso offers this reading of a sample opening of the *Codex Nuttall*, (pages 83-84 of the codex), beginning in the lower right corner (see figure 10): The year is 11 House and the day 12 Monkey (A.D. 1049). On the day 12 Monkey, 8 Deer Tiger Claw conquered a place represented by "God Xipe's bundle," taking prisoner its youngest prince, the nine-year old 4 Wind Serpent of Fire, and his older brothers. The following year, 12 Rabbit, on the day 6 Serpent, 8 Deer, disguised as a red tiger, along with a comrade disguised as a yellow tiger, engaged in sacrificial gladiatorial combat with prince 10 Dog Eagle Copal Burning and another warrior disguised as death. 8 Deer killed this other prince, 6 House Row of Flint Knives, shooting him on the day 1 Cane (961). As Caso points out, his reading takes cognizance of the threefold character of the text: elements which are iconographic (essentially visual in a representational manner), elements which are ideographic (symbolic representations standing for things), and elements of phonetic value, virtually all in the case of toponyms and proper names (951). Similarly, Boone offers a reading of the pages (6 through 8) of another Mixtec treasure, the Codex Selden, dealing with the life of Lady 6 Monkey ("Aztec Pictorial Histories" 55- 59), as King does of a ritual sequence from the Vienna Codex ("Hearing the Echoes" 115- 18); and van der Loo transcribes p. 21 of the Codex Cospi (a manuscript from the so-called Borgia Group originating in the Mixteca-Puebla area) as a complete prayer (82- 84).

In the case of the Mexica, or Aztec, there is no incontrovertible example of a surviving pre-Columbian codex, although the Aubin may be one, but the Barbonicus (like the Aubin a *tonalamatl*) and the *Matricula de Tributos* and the *Tira de la Peregrinación*, although post-contact, are almost purely indigenous in style, while other post-contact manuscripts such as the Codices Magliabecchi, Mendoza, and Tolteca-Chichimeca, and the Sahagúntine corpus, manifest varying degrees of Europeanized indigenous imagery and feature textual material in alphabetized Nahuatl. The Mendoza Codex, for instance, produced by native artists at the behest of the Viceroy of Mexico, offers indigenous-style illustration accompanied by some textual commentary, one section dealing with Aztec daily life, on such themes as child-rearing, another with Aztec history, such as the career of Moctezuma (see fig. 11, showing a woman teaching a 12-year old girl to make tortillas, and teaching a 14-year old girl to weave—along with the girls' rations of two tortillas for performing the tasks).

The assumption has always been that the Aztecs did not have a writing system as we have defined it: that is, that the manuscripts and relief carvings of the Aztecs were purely pictographic and ideographic, and thus not language-specific. But as Charles Dibble has shown, the pre-contact Tizoc Stone, while mostly pictographic, shows some glyphs with a phonetic dimension, as do the glyphs in the post-contact *Matricula de Tributos*, *Tira de la Peregrinación* and Codex Mendoza, the former two probably representing copies of pre-Columbian prototypes. The mid-sixteenth century Codex Kingsborough shows fully developed syllabic writing, using the homonym combination system resorted to by the friars to teach Christian prayers, e.g.: *te(ntli)* 'lips' + *te(tl)* 'rock' + *pan(tli)* 'flag' + *tlan (tli)* 'teeth' reads Tetepantlan (By the Rock Walls) [see fig. 12]. Here the separate elements of the glyph correspond to the number of syllables in the place name, and the elements give only their sound value, so that the shift from picture word to syllabic writing is complete, which "can be considered as the end result of colonial influences on Aztec hieroglyphic writing" (Dibble 331; cf. Gruzinski 160, 204).

Clearly the Aztec scribes *(tlacuilcos)*, those who worked in "the red, the black" (the writing colors), routinely combined word and image, painting and writing, which European culture considered radically distinct. Thus, as Gruzinski explains, "It is therefore impossible to speak of writing in the usual sense of the term. It would seem that decoding the paintings originally required a two-fold operation: while the eye scanned the images, the reader uttered words inspired by oral tradition. Sound and image apparently complemented one another, without the one being a version of the other. Paintings were thus 'made' to speak and, in turn, 'paintings' reinforced and refreshed oral memory" (15). There is a great deal of sixteenth century testimony by the Spanish about the role of scribes and the 'reading' of pictures (see Peterson 233-35). Bernal Diaz refers several times to the fact that Moctezuma was apprised of events in Mexico by means of 'paintings,' and that his emissaries brought 'painters' with them to document the Spanish incursion for him (91), and Duran reports the same, adding that Moctezuma also "wished to know if the ancestors of the painters had left information regarding these things, or painted manuscripts or pictures" (269), that is, whether any ancient paintings prophesied the arrival of the Spanish. Furthermore, Duran adduces Mexican paintings he saw as definitive evidence that Moctezuma was put in irons by the Spanish, an "atrocious deed" that the Spanish, Duran says, continue to deny (293).

The most extraordinary of the ethnographer friars, in coming closest to "editorial silence," is Sahagún in his 1579 *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva Espana*, the *Florentine Codex*, in which Sahagún presents the results of some thirty years of labor in eliciting, transcribing and redacting information on Nahua culture and the natural and supernatural worlds as told by a set of "reliable narrators," a group of Nahua elders knowledgable at first hand about pre-contact indigenous culture and language, and who were first-hand witnesses of the conquest of Tenochtitlan. These informants of Tepuloco and Tlatelolco first presented their information in the form of pictorial images—not linguistic glyphs, as in the Mayan or Zapotec systems, but not merely illustrations either, but rather pictures that encoded an implied text and were traditionally intended to prompt an oral recitation. Thus, the second element of the text was the Nahua narration as transcribed from the speech of the elders by trilingual Indian seminarians of the missionary school of Santa Cruz, who wrote down their words in the alphabetized Nahuatl devised by the friars, as quoted earlier (see Prologue to Bk II; 13: 53- 56). Sahgún spent half a lifetime collecting, collating, arranging and redacting, this material, which he accompanied with a linguistic gloss and a Spanish paraphrase/translation. The result is a document whose main text is perhaps as close to the indigenous voice of the early 16th century Mexico as we are ever likely to get—although it must be remembered that this is a narrative of first-generation Christian converts.

Of particular interest in the *Florentine Codex* narrative of the conquest is the way physical gestures are described and portrayed, for here we encounter material that is profoundly culturally encoded. The Spanish narratives describe Nahua gestures as though they are immediately understandable and need no cultural decoding: gestures taken as self-evident signs of fear, anxiety, abasement—and so forth. It is true that some of these same native gestures reappear in the Florentine Codex; on the other hand, what is distinctly new is the presentation of the behavior of the Spaniards as outlandish and uncouth. When Montezuma sends the Spaniards presents of gold during their march to Tenochtitlan, Sahagún's informants describe the scene as no Spaniard could:

> And when they had given them these, they appeared to smile; they were greatly contented, gladdened. As if they were monkeys they seized upon the gold. It was as if their hearts were satisfied, brightened, calmed. For in truth they thirsted mightily for gold; they stuffed themselves with it; they starved for it; they lusted for it like pigs. (vol. 13: 31)

The illustration in this case (no. 25), however, is bland, and lacks the bite of this metaphoric language. Frequently, too, the movements of the Spaniards are described as "hyperactive": upon their approach to Tenochtitlan, they are described as gaping and turning every which way—like dogs:

> They went continually turning about; they went turning about repeatedly. They went facing the people. They went looking hither and thither; they came scanning every side, they went looking everywhere among the groups of houses, they came examining things. They went looking up at the roof terraces.
>
> Likewise their dogs: their dogs came ahead. They came sniffing at things. Each one came panting; each one came continually panting. (13: 39)

But again, the illustration (no. 32) is bland, lacking the piquancy of the language.

We know from every source that the Mexica did not take physical or even perceptual liberties with the person of their emperor: even his intimates in the royal palace were said to turn away and avert their eyes when Montezuma was eating. Hence the shock of the Aztec attendants, acknowledged in the Spanish chronicles, when Cortes moved to embrace Montezuma upon their first meeting. The Florentine Codex, in its laconic manner, allows the "politics of touch" to speak for itself, beginning with Cortes' words of greeting "in his barbarous tongue":

> "Let Moctezuma put his heart at ease; let him not be frightened. We love him much. Now our hearts are indeed satisfied, for we know him, we hear him. For a long time we have wished to see him, to look upon his face. And this we have seen...."
>
> Thereupon [the Spaniards] grasped [Moctezuma] by the hand. Already they went leading him by it. They carressed him with their hands to make their love known to him. (13: 45)

But the native illustration is more revealing than the text, showing Moctezuma rather rudely hauled about (no. 45—see fig. 13).

The physically intrusive behavior of the Spanish continually calls for comment by the informants. We can presume that the Mexica were circumspect about how they intruded on one another's "space," in general, from the way the informants call attention to how the Spanish stared directly at the women grinding amarinth in the temple courtyard prior to the Toxcatl festival: "they came among them; they circled about them; they looked at each one, they looked into the faces of the grinding women" (13: 51). Here the illustration visually confirms the unpleasant intrusiveness (no. 56—see fig. 14). The aggressive implications are fulfilled in the ensuing massacre. In the Preface to Book XII, on the conquest, Sahagún reiterates that his purpose in compiling this information is not to give the indigenous viewpoint per se, but to collect examples of Nahuatl vocabulary and rhetoric relating to warfare, but that this is no "superfluous task," because "those who were conquered knew and gave an account of many things which transpired among them during the war of which those who conquered them were unaware," and that these things ought to be preserved because "those who gave this account [were] principal persons of good judgment, and it is believed they told all the truth" (1.101).

Thus, in recounting controversial events, such as the massacre of the Toxcatl festival, the indigenous viewpoint in Sahagún's compilation is unmistakable: unlike the Spanish sources, the informants describe the atrocities in lurid physical detail, both in the pictures and in the narrative text:

> Then they struck the drummer's arms; they severed both his hands: then they struck his neck. Far off did his neck [and head] go to fall. Then they pierced the people with iron lances and they struck them each with iron swords. Of some they slashed open their backs: then their entrails gushed out. Of some they cut their heads to pieces; they absolutely pulverized their heads.... of some they struck the belly; then their entrails gushed forth. And when in vain one would run, he would only drag his intestines like something raw as he tried to escape (13.55, and illus. nos. 66- 69 [see fig. 15; cf. Duran, fig. 16]).

Examples from the Sahagúntine corpus could be multiplied, but it is clear from these few that the picture/text relationship in indigenous-inspired documents continues to be significantly different from that in most European documents, even well into the colonial period, and that image and text continue to function as comensurate components of the total writing and reading experience.

The various post-contact Mexican texts seem to represent in some cases an interweaving, and in other cases a balancing of indigenous and European picture/text relationships. Sahagún's *Prímeros Memoriales* seems to preserve Aztec pictorial tradition strongly, and with the text prompted or generated by the images, in the Aztec manner, whereas the *Codex Mendoza* seems to present its indigenous-style imagery more in the European manner of illustration. The richest text of all, Sahagún's *Florentine Codex*, as we have seen, presents an extensive Nahua text with copious illustrations, but the illustrations seem fundamentally European in conception, and yet with much indigenous matter; it is much harder in that case to know where the priority lies between text elements and picture elements.

The fit was more uncomfortable in the Andean world, however, accounting for the relative paucity of post-colonial indigenous texts, compared with Mexico. In the Inca tradition, with a largely non-representational visual tradition, information was visually encoded in the abstract *tocapu* designs on textiles and *keros* (wooden drinking cups), just as *quipu* (knotted strings) fulfilled some of the functions of a writing system. One of the few major examples of an early post-contact Andean text, Guaman Poma's *Nueva coronica i buen gobierno* (c. 1615), is famous for its plethora of what look to be rather crude European-style illustrations, but as Adorno has shown, the composition of these images does seem to encode information after the manner of the abstract indigenous *tocapu* designs. using left/right and upper/lower positioning in traditionally symbolic ways, for instance, sometimes with counter-significance to the accompanying text (Adorno 1986).

A reason for the closer fit between the indigenous and European modes of writing in the case of the valley of Mexico may lie not only in the differences between the Mesoamerican and Andean traditions, but in the medieval iconographic traditions borne by the first Franciscans in Mexico. As Emile Mâle showed in his works on gothic art, medieval religious images could function as symbolic texts in their own right. For instance, iconographic programs or narrative cycles in stone or glass often look to the post-Reformation viewer like illustrations of Biblical texts, à la Rembrandt or Doré, but in fact they are better read as representations of liturgical action. A medieval "Nativity" image, for instance, typically does not illustrate (as would a modern Christmas card) the text in Luke, but evokes the Christmas liturgy and its symbolism, as a Passion scene would evoke the Easter triduum liturgies rather than illustrate the narrative texts of the gospels. Sometimes, as in the case of themes such as the Coronation of Mary, the iconography can enter realms that formal written theology would not dare broach.

It is argued here that post-contact Mexican texts such as the *Florentine Codex* (and, to a lesser extent, an Andean text such as Guaman Poma) "work" somewhat in the same way as Mâle's reading of medieval iconography: that pictures do not simply illustrate texts but rather independently convey parallel, supplementary or complementary—or even counter-discursive—information. Sometimes iconographic details, as in the case of Mexican "tequitqui" crosses, rich in imagery readable both in European Christian and pre-Christian indigenous terms, or even artistic media themselves, as in the case of feather paintings or corn-paste sculptures of Christian motifs, can convey an indigenous "message" that supplements the overt meaning of the object and any accompanying text.

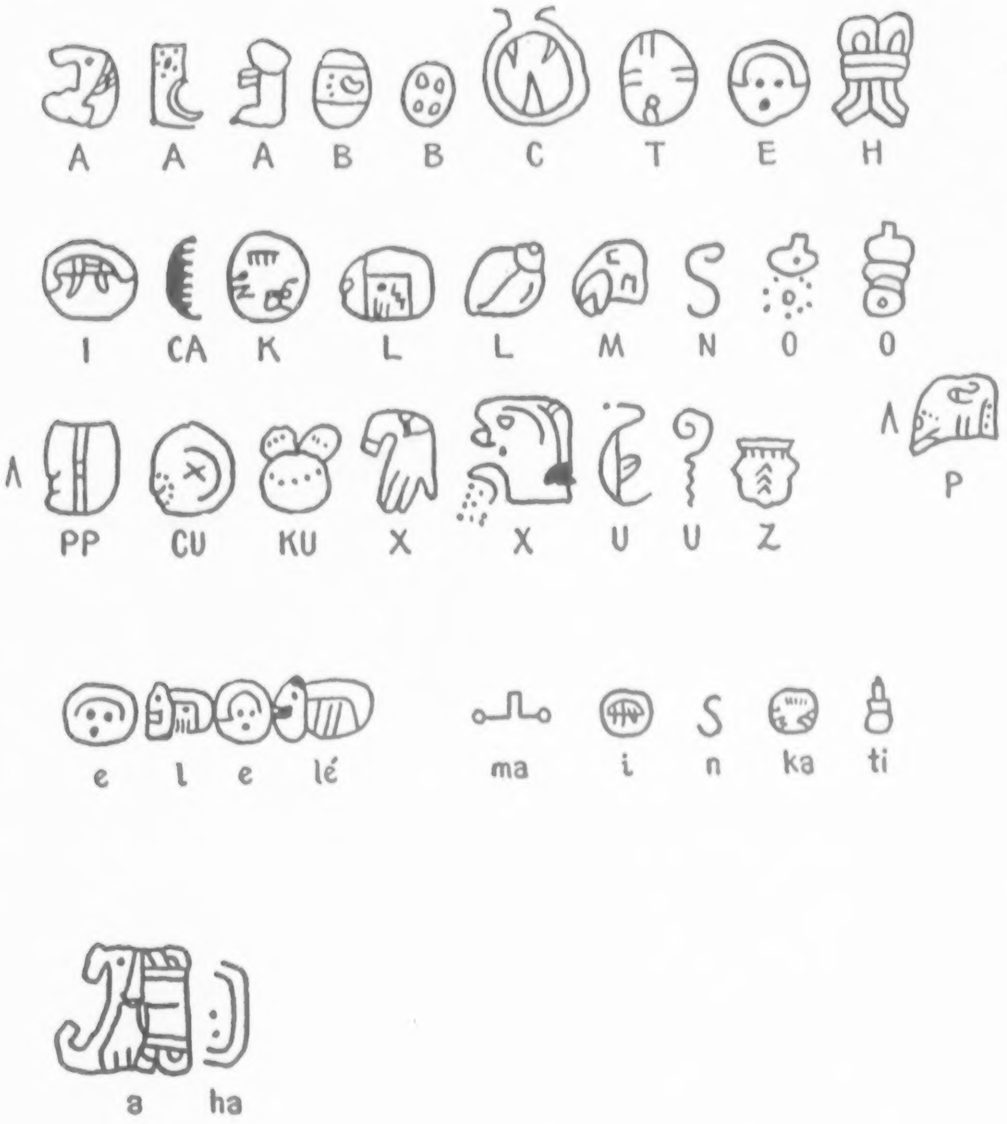

A A A B B C T E H
I CA K L L M N O O
PP CU KU X X U U Z
P
e l e lé
ma i n ka ti
a ha

Fig. 1
Diego de Landa's Maya alphabet (c. 1566)
Adapted from *Landa's Relacíon de las cosas de Yucatán, A Translation,* ed. Alfred M. Tozzer. Peabody Museum, *Papers*, vol. XVIII (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1941), p. 170.

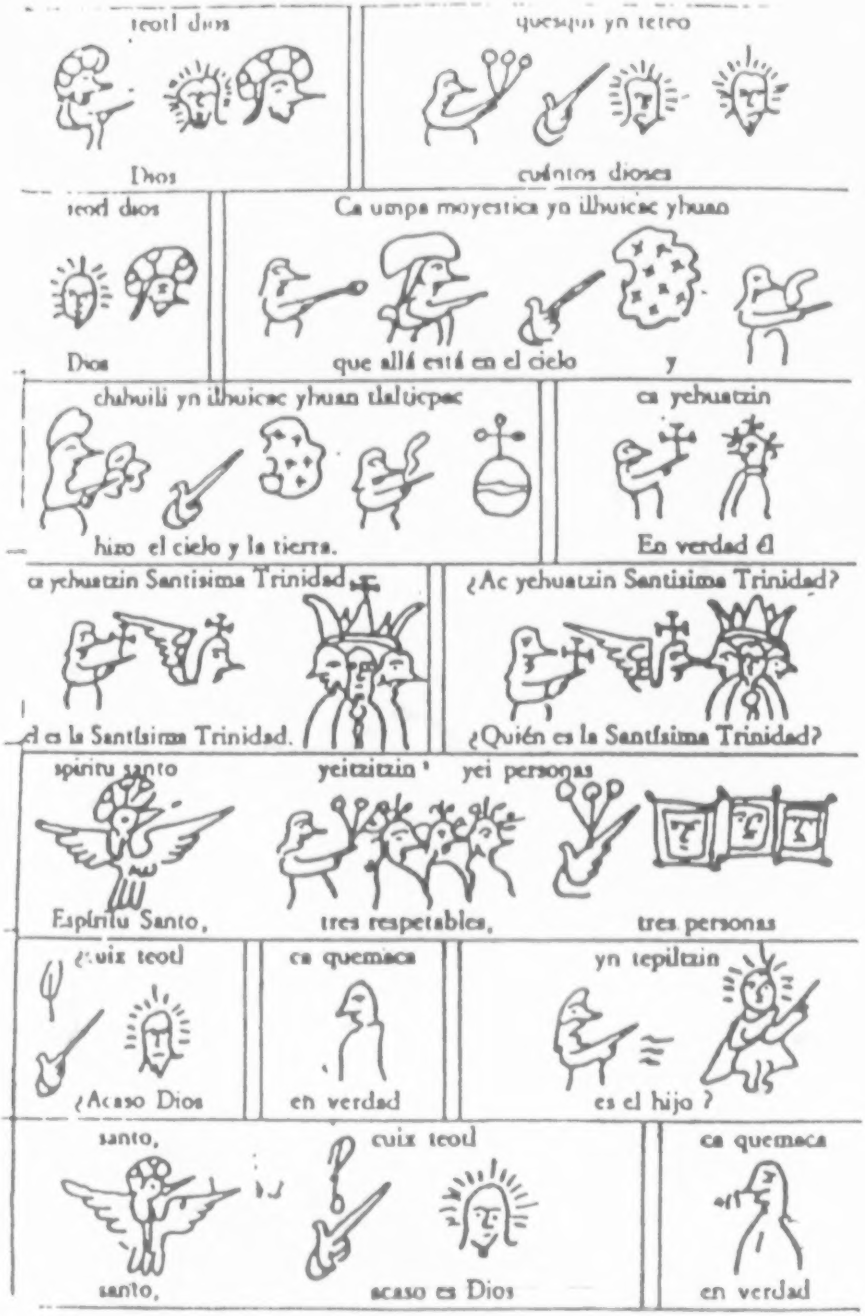

teotl dios
Dios
quesquis yn teteo
cuántos dioses
teotl dios
Dios
Ca umpa moyestica yn ilhuicac yhuan
que allá está en el cielo y
chihuili yn ilhuicac yhuan tlalticpac
hizo el cielo y la tierra.
ca yehuatzin
En verdad él
ca yehuatzin Santisima Trinidad
él es la Santísima Trinidad.
¿Ac yehuatzin Santisima Trinidad?
¿Quién es la Santísima Trinidad?
spiritu santo
Espíritu Santo,
yeitzitzin
tres respetables,
yei personas
tres personas
¿cuix teotl
¿Acaso Dios
ca quemaca
en verdad
yn tepiltzin
es el hijo ?
santo,
santo,
cuix teotl
acaso es Dios
ca quemaca
en verdad

Fig. 2
Page from a Testerian Catechism, early 16th c.
Reprinted from *Reader* for University of Maryland NEH Summer Institute.
"The Encounter of Cultures: Sixteenth-Century Mexico" (College Park:
Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 1989), supplementary p. 18.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

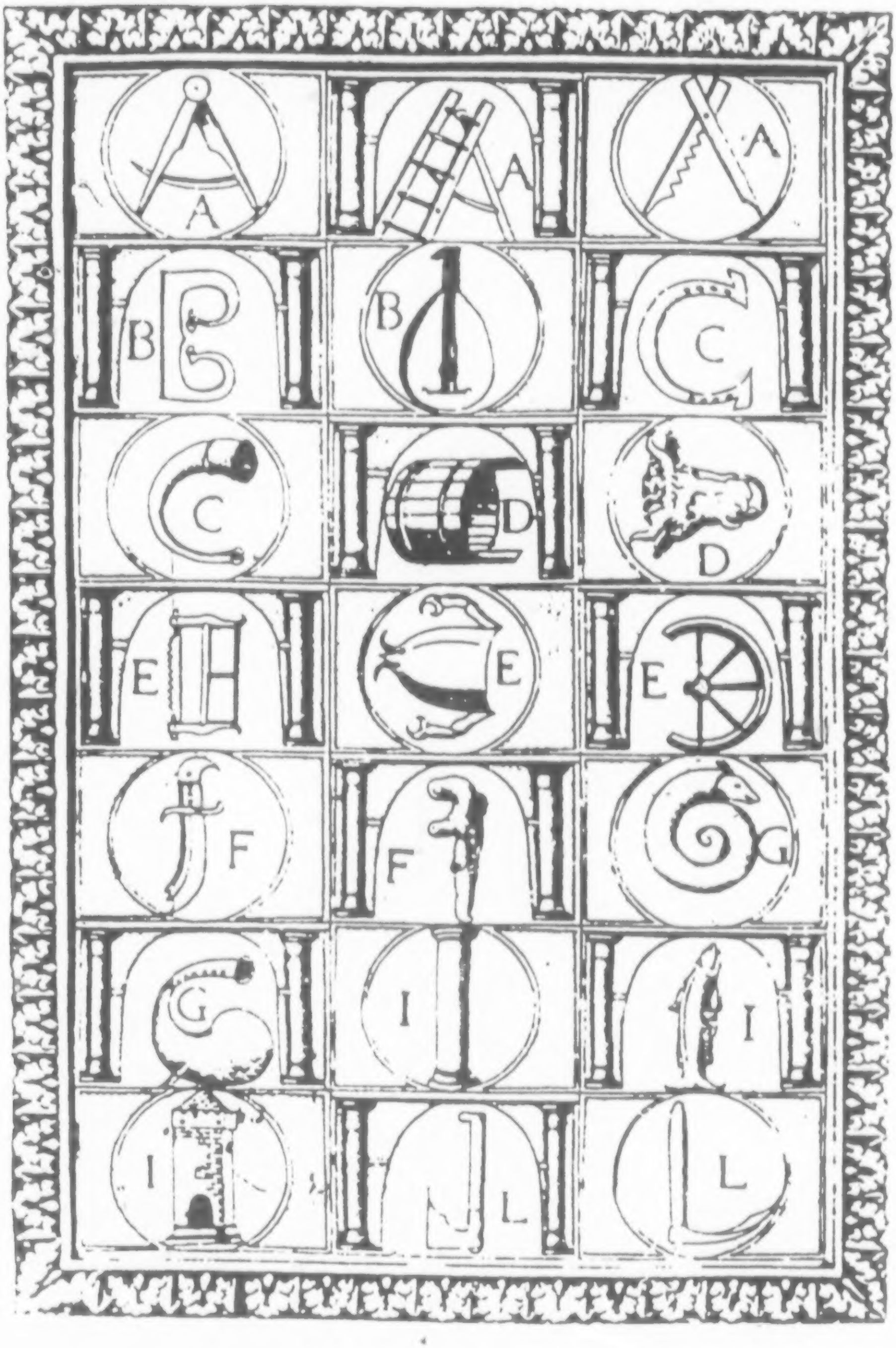

A
A
A
B
B
C
C
D
D
E
E
E
F
F
G
G
I
I
I
L
L

Fig. 3
Rebus alphabet, from Diego Valadés, *Rhetorica Christiana* (Perusiae, 1579), between pages 98-99.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

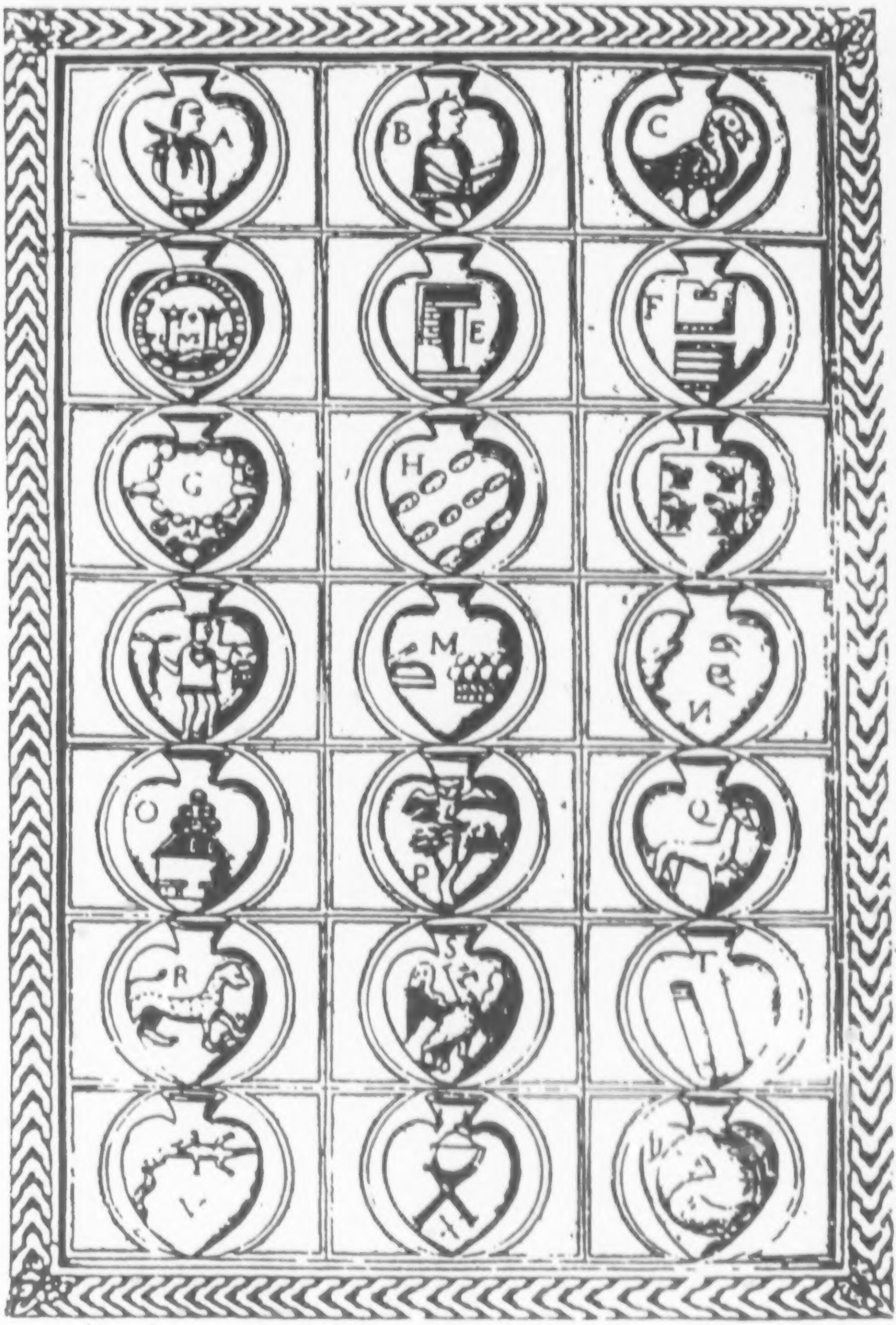

A
B
C
M
E
F
G
H
I
M
O
P
Q
R
S
T

Fig. 4
Phonetic alphabet, from Diego Valadés, *Rhetorica Christiana* (Perusiae, 1579), between pages 98-99.

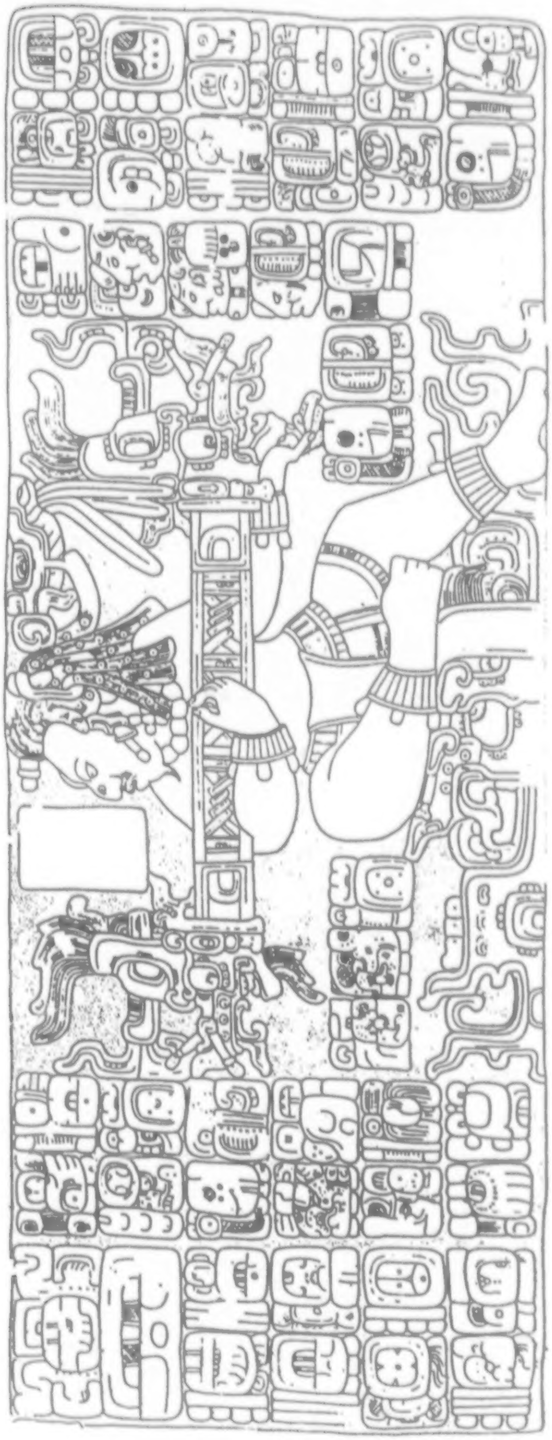


Fig. 5
Panel 1, Lacanja; collection of Dumbarton Oaks,
Washington, D.C.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

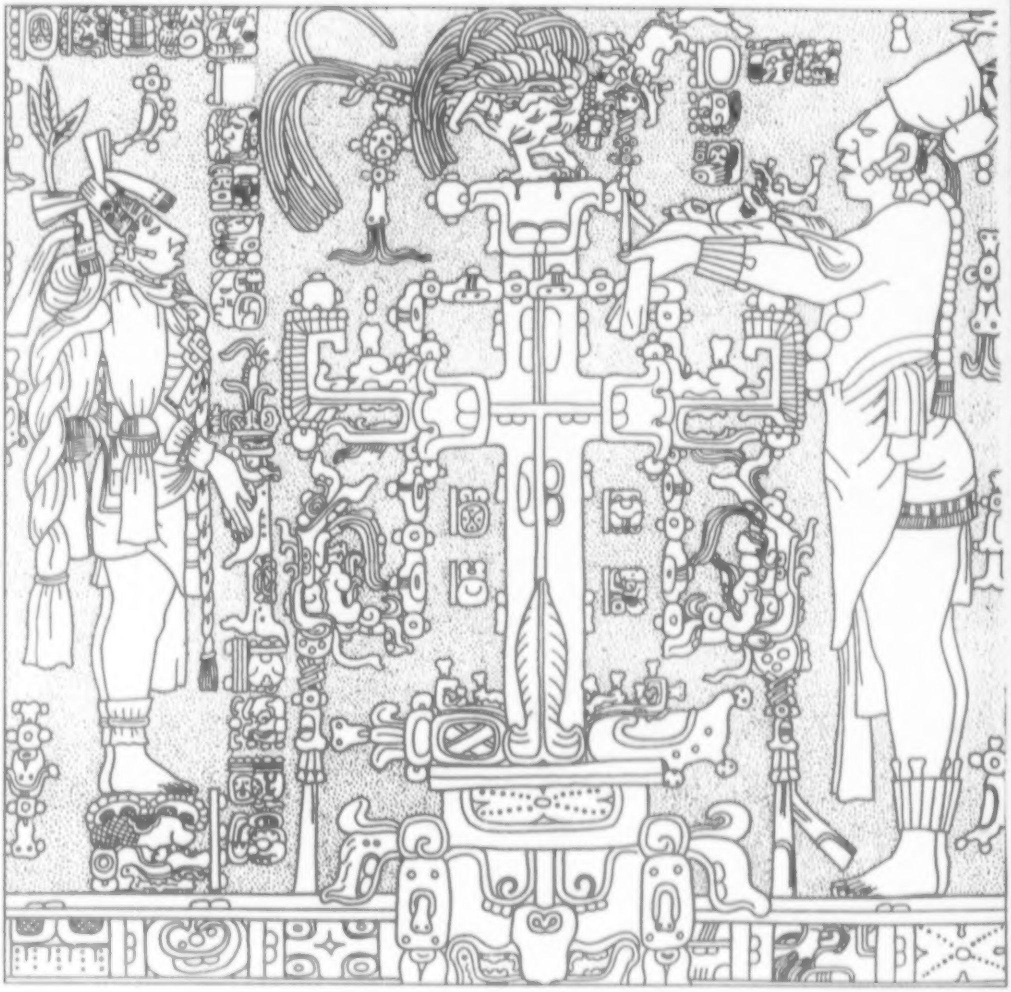


Fig. 6
Panel of the Cross, Palenque.
Drawing from Linda Schele, "Accession Iconography of Chan-Bahlum in the Group of the Cross at Palenque," *The Art, Iconography, and Dynastic History of Palenque, Part III, Proceedings of the Segunda Mesa Redonda de Palenque*, ed. Merle Greene Robertson (Pebble Beach, CA: Pre-Columbian Art Research, 1976), fig. 6.

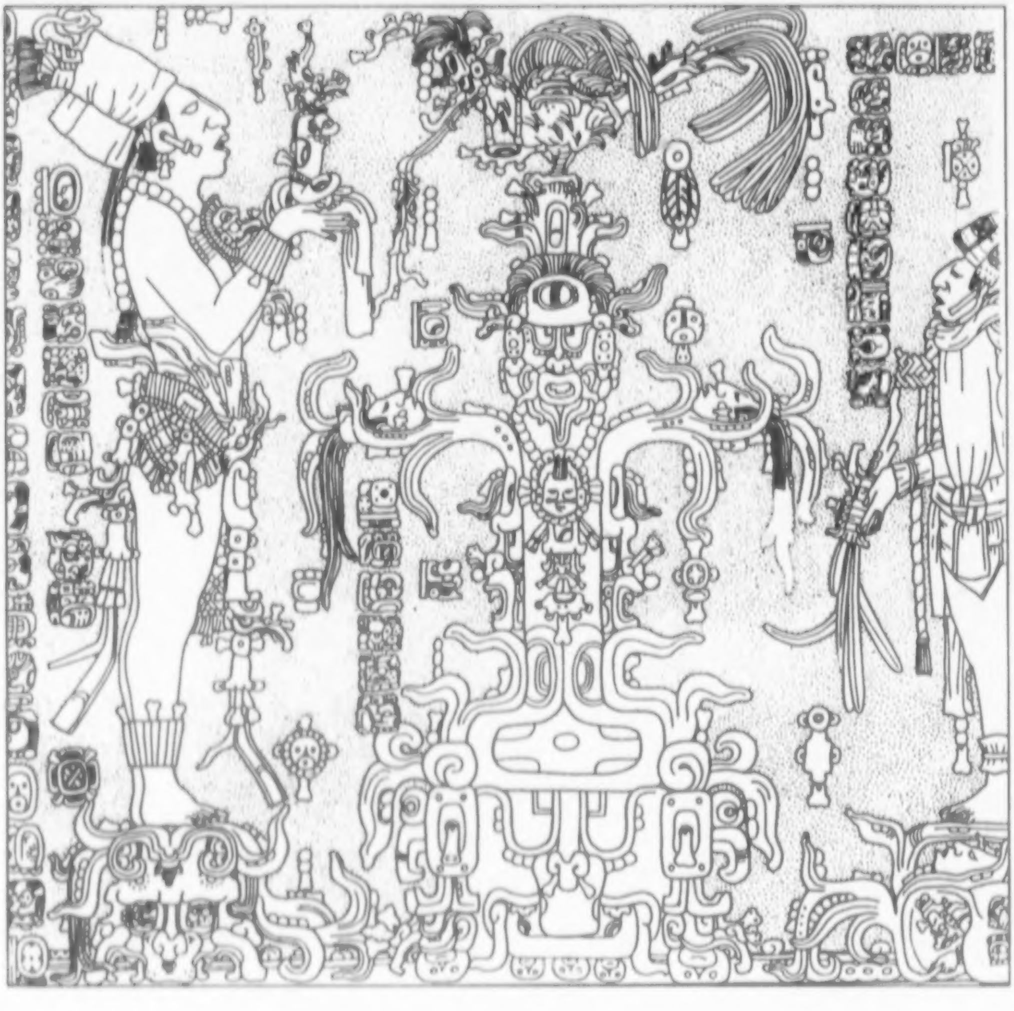


Fig. 7
Panel of the Foliated Cross, Palenque.
Drawing from Linda Schele, "Accession Iconography of Chan-Bahlum in the Group of the Cross at Palenque," *The Art, Iconography, and Dynastic History of Palenque, Part III, Proceedings of the Segunda Mesa Redonda de Palenque*, ed. Merle Greene Robertson (Pebble Beach, CA: Pre-Columbian Art Research, 1976), fig. 10.

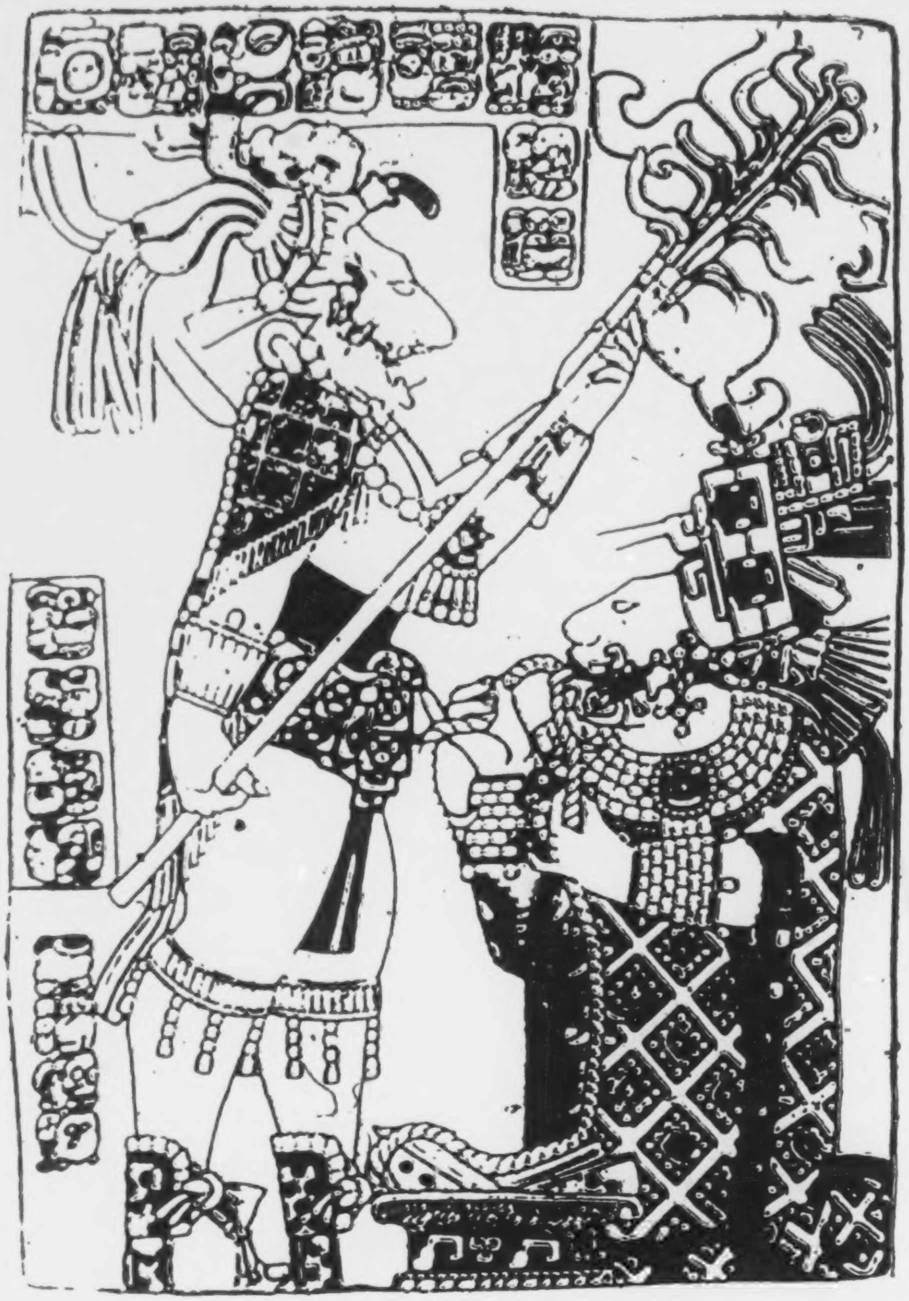


Fig. 9
Lintel 24, Yaxchilan: Lady Xoc's blood-letting ritual.
Drawing from Ian Graham, from Linda Schele and David Freidel.
A Forest of Kings (NY: William Morrow, 1990), fig. 7:3a, p. 267.

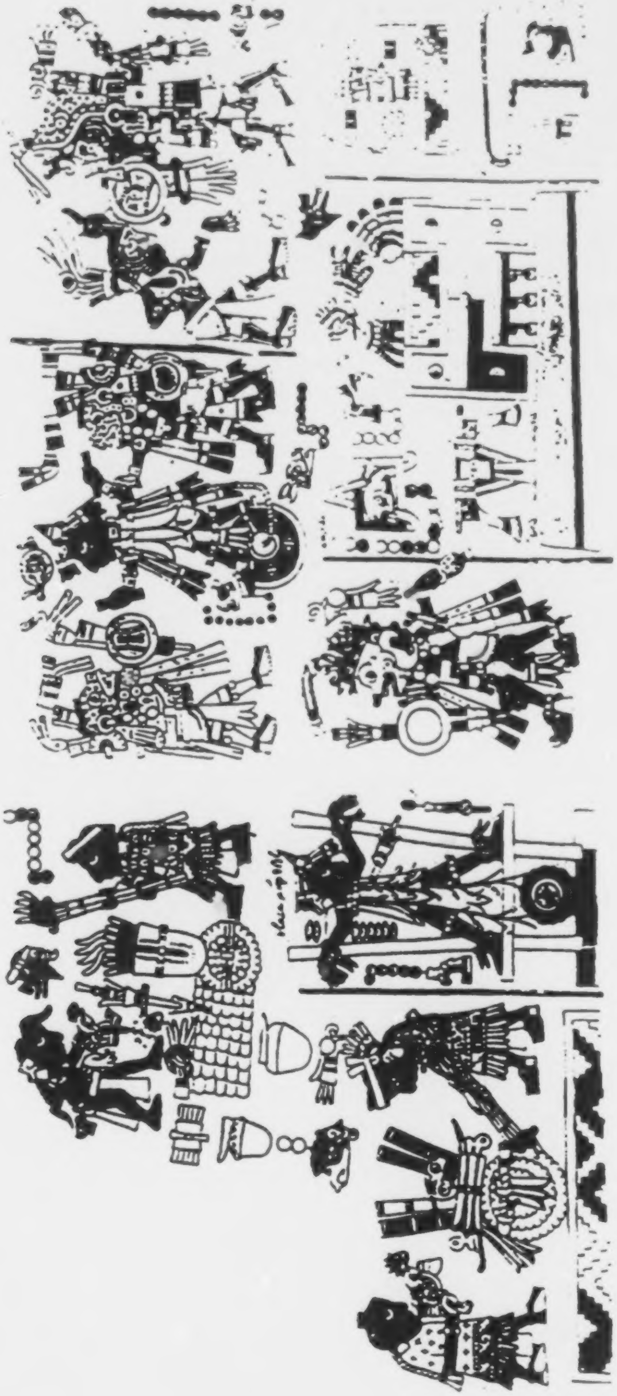
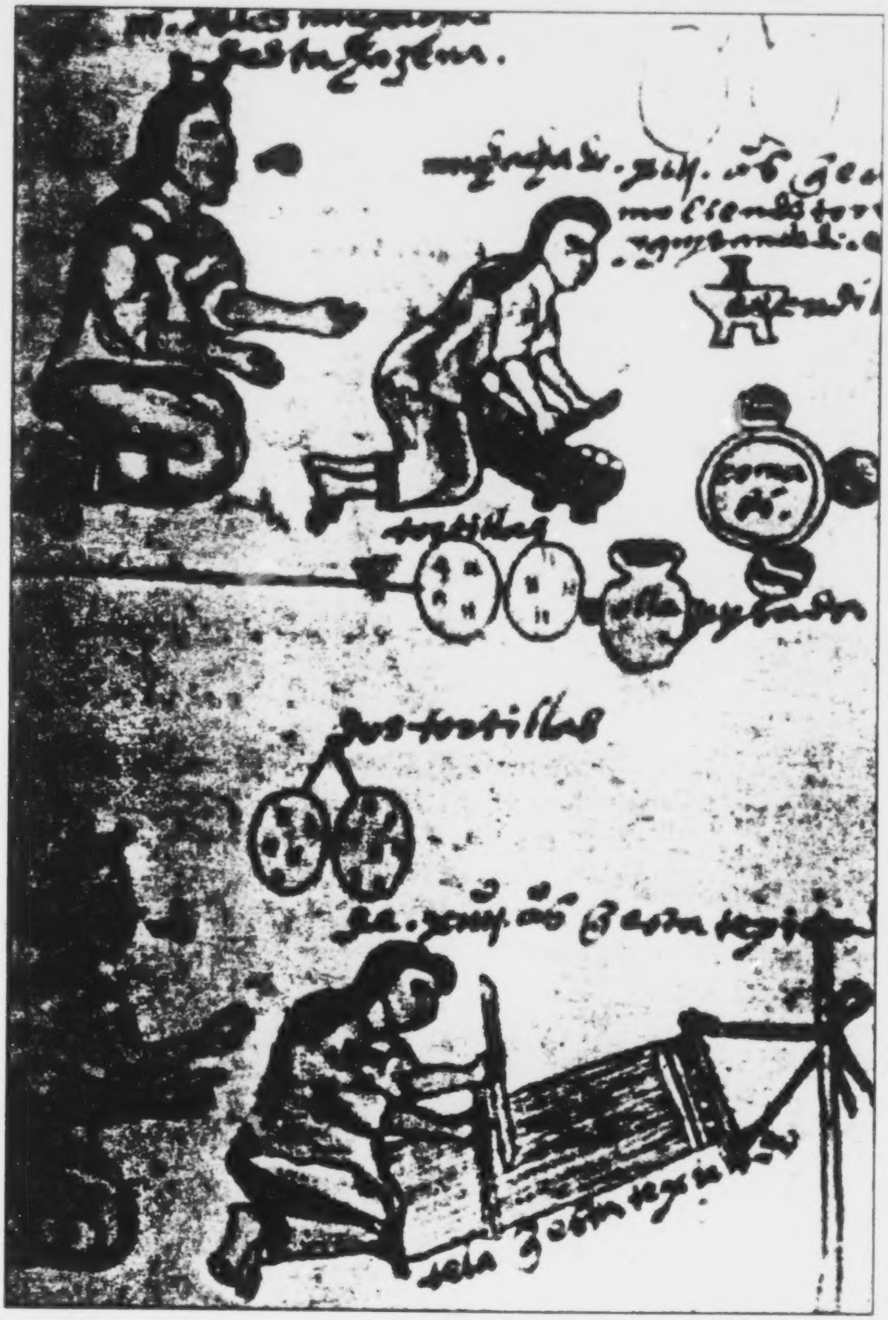


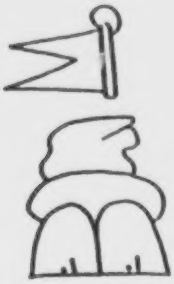
Fig. 10
Narrative of 8 Deer Tiger's Claw.
The *Codex Nuttall*, ed. Zelia Nuttall (NY: Dover, 1975), facsimile pp. 83-84



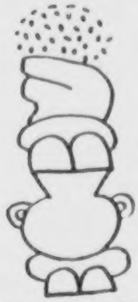
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Fig. 11
Child-rearing.
Codex Mendoza (MS Bodleian Library, Oxford), det. fol. 60r.

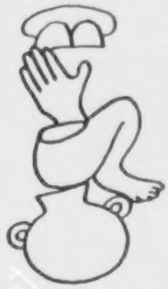
BEST COPY AVAILABLE



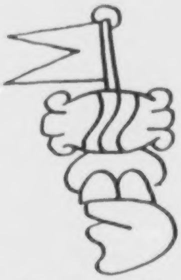
teeth: tla-ntli
lips: te-ntli
flag: pan-tli
tlatepan



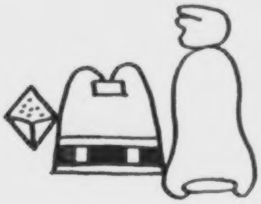
lips: te-ntli
ashes: nex-tli
teeth: tla-ntli
jar: co-mitl
teeth: tlan-tli
tenextlacotlan



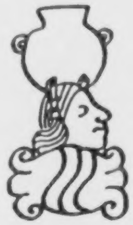
teeth: tla-ntli
hand: ma-itl
lower body: tzin-tli
jar: co-mitl
tlamatzinco



lips: te-ntli
rock: te-tl
flag: pan-tli
teeth: tlan-tli
tetepantlan



sage: chi-an
blouse: hui-pil-li
lips: te-ntli
mountain: te-petl
chipiltepec



rock: te-tl
mother: nan-tli
jar: co-mitl
tenaco

Fig. 12
Toponym Glyphs from *Codex Kingsborough*.
From Charles Dibble, "Writing in Central Mexico." *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, vol. 10 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), fig. 3, p. 329.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

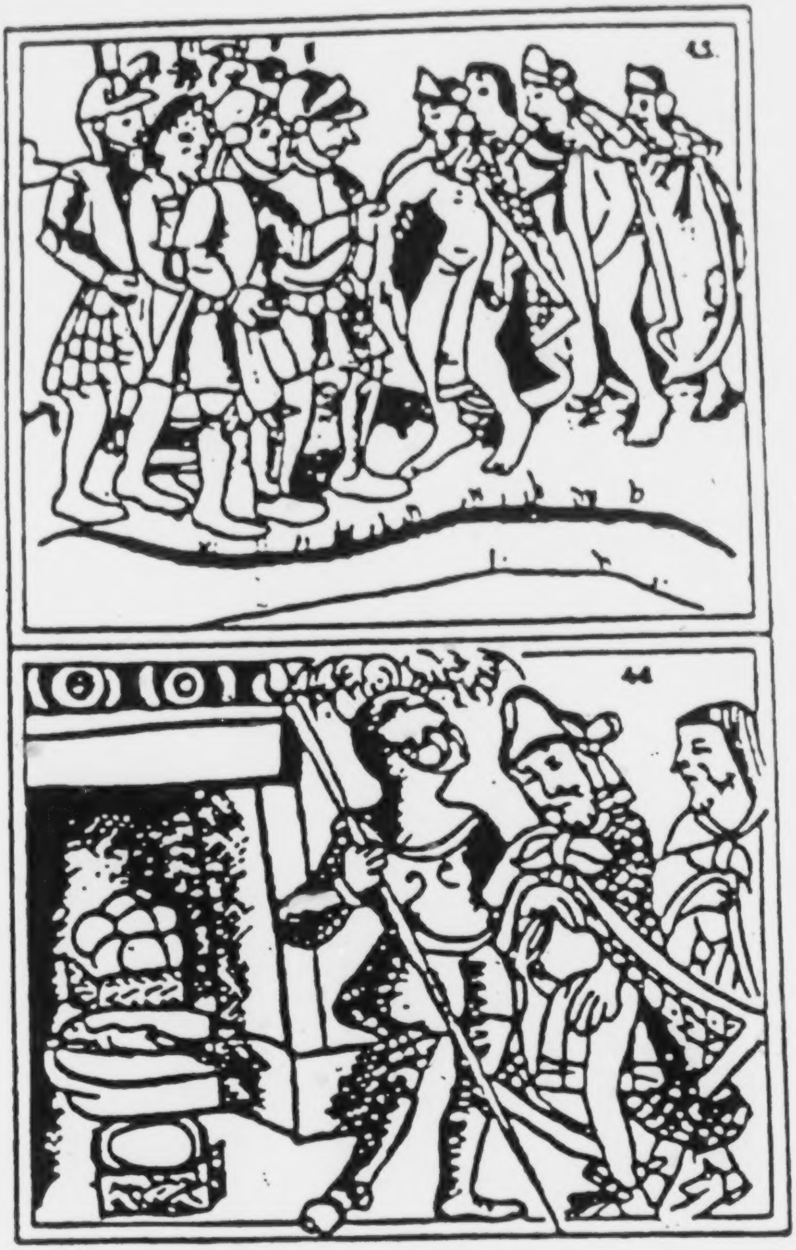


Fig. 13
Cortes and Moctezuma.
Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, illus. 45 and 46. Drawings after Paso y Troncoso, from *Florentine Codex/ General History of the Things of New Spain*, ed. and trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E Dibble, 2nd ed., revised. Part XIII. (School of American Research, Monographs, No. 14. Santa Fe: University of Utah, 1975).

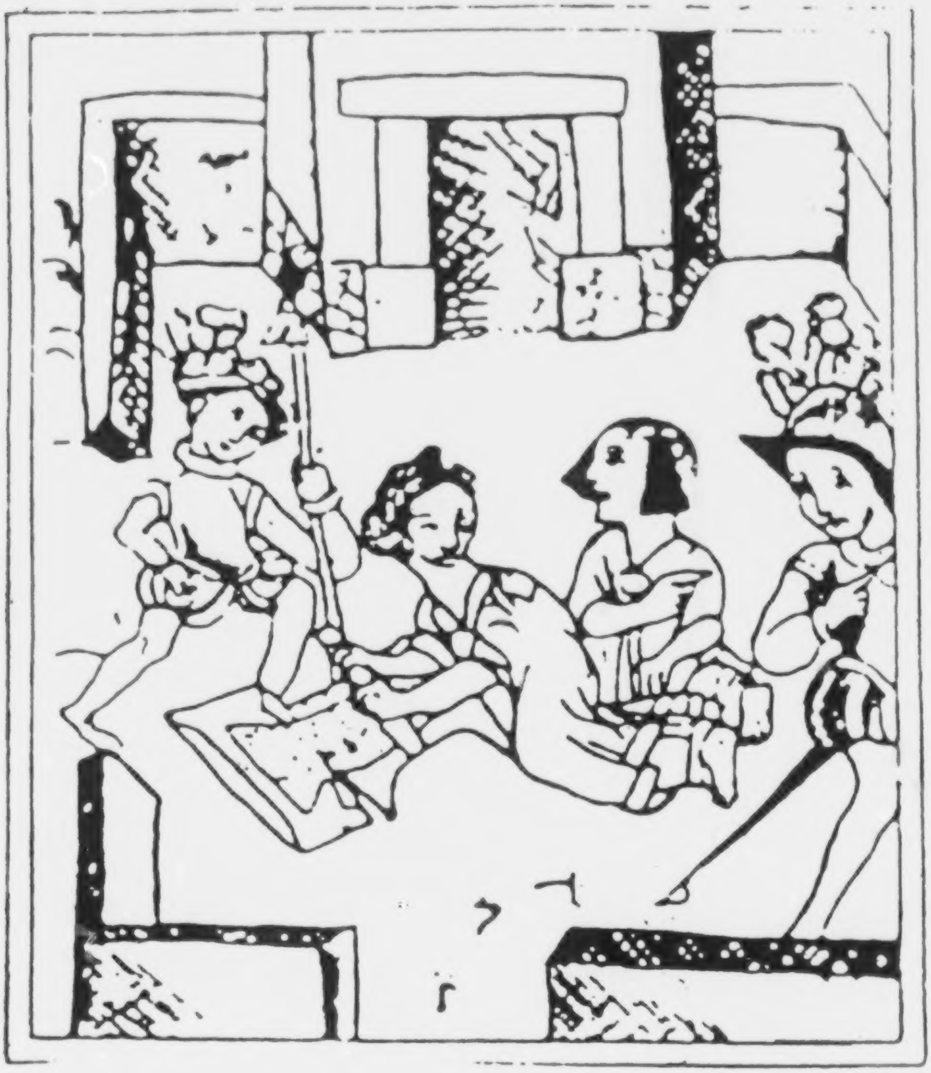


Fig. 14
Spaniards stare at mexica women grinding amarinth.
Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, illus. 56.
Drawings after Paso y Troncoso, from *Florentine Codex/ General History of the Things of New Spain*, ed. and trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E Dibble, 2nd ed., revised. Part XIII. (School of American Research, Monographs, No. 14. Santa Fe: University of Utah, 1975).

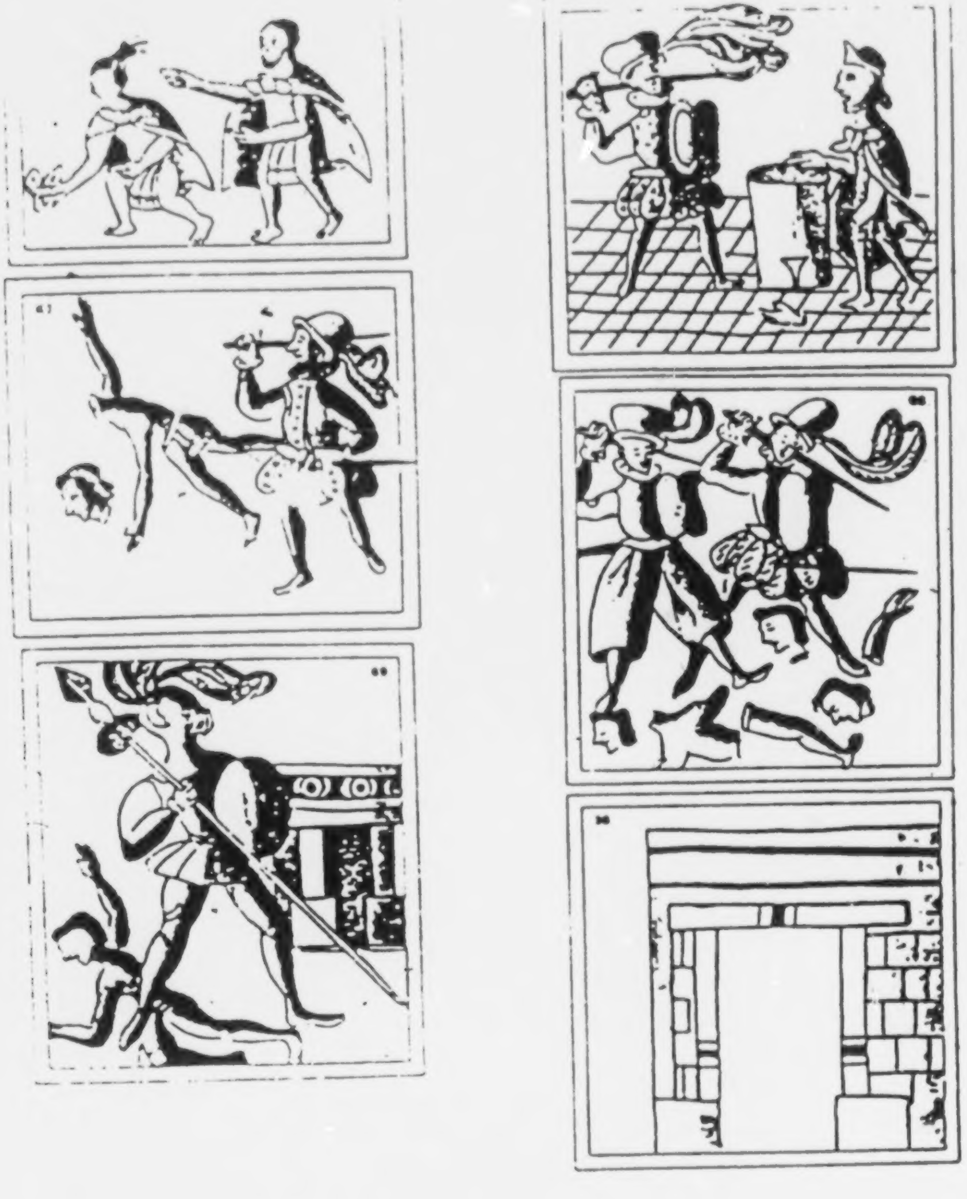


Fig. 15
Images of the Toxcatl massacre.
Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, illus. 65-70.
Drawings after Paso y Troncoso, from *Florentine Codex/ General History of the Things of New Spain*, ed. and trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E Dibble, 2nd ed., revised. Part XIII. (School of American Research, Monographs, No. 14. Santa Fe: University of Utah, 1975).

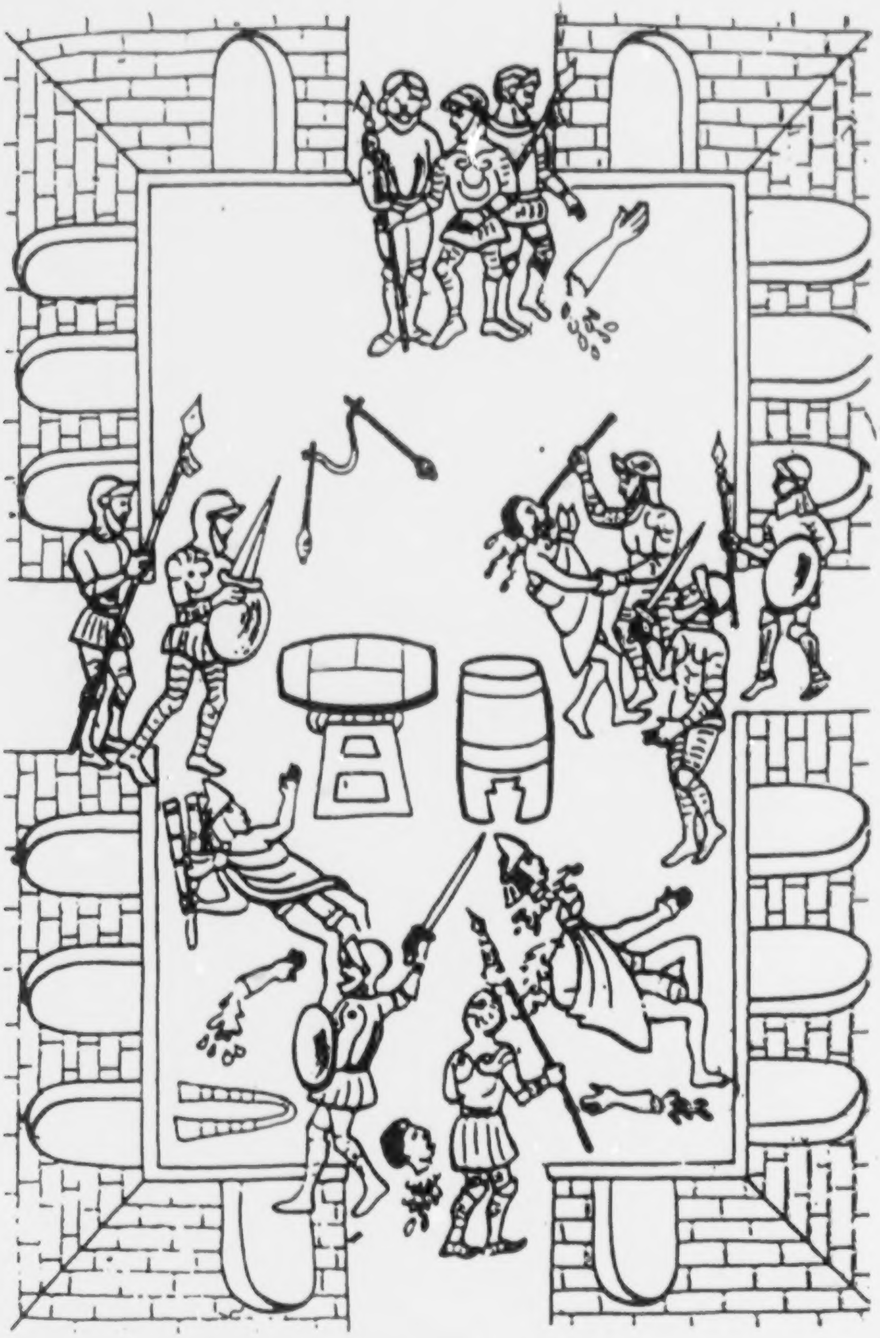


Fig. 16
The Toxcatl massacre.
Drawing by Alberto Beltran, adapted from Diego Duran, *History of the Indies* (chap. 75), reprinted from *The Broken Spears/ The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, ed. Miguel Léon-Portilla, tr. Lysander Kemp (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), p. 75.

Works Cited

Acosta, Joseph de. *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*. Ed. Edmundo O'Gorman. México, D.F.: Fundo de Cultura Económica, 1962.

Adorno, Rolena. "Discourses on Colonialism: Bernal Diaz, Las Casas, and the Twentieth-Century Reader." *Modern Language Notes* 103.2 (March 1988): 239-58.

Adorno, Rolena and Walter D. Mignolo, eds. *Dispositio XIV*, Nos. 36-38. Special Issue: "Colonial Discourse."

Adorno, Rolena. *Guaman Poma/ Writing and Resisitance in Colonial Peru*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986.

Anderson, Arthur, Frances Berdan, and James Lockhart, eds. *Beyond the Codices*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

Baird, Ellen Taylor. "The Artists of Sahagún's Primeros Memoriales A Question of Identity." *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún/ Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Ed. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, H. B. Nicholson and Eloise Quinones Keber. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies/ The University at Albany, SUNY; distributed by University of Texas Press, 1988. 255-272.

Benson, Elizabeth P., ed. *Mesoamerican Writing Systems*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1973.

Bernal Diaz del Castillo. *The Conquest of New Spain*. Trans. by J. M. Cohen. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1963.

Boone, Elizabeth. "Aztec Pictorial Histories: Records Without Words" In *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo. Durham: Duke University, 1994. 50- 76.

Boone, Elizabeth and Walter Mignolo, eds. *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*. Durham: Duke University, 1994.

Bricker, Victoria. *A Grammar of Mayan Hieroglyphics*. Middle American Research Institute Publication 56. New Orleans: Tulane University press, 1986.

Burkhart, Louise M. *The Slippery Earth/ Nahua-Christian Moral Dialogue in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989.

Caso, Alfonso. "Mixtec Writing and Calendar." *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, Pt. 2, vol. 3. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965. 948-61.

Cline, S. L. "Revisionist Conquest History: Sahagún's Revised Book XII." *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún/ Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Ed. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, H. B. Nicholson and Eloise Quinones Keber. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies/ The University at Albany, SUNY; distributed by University of Texas Press, 1988. 93-106.

Codex Mendoza. Ed. Frances F. Berdan and Patricia Anawalt. 4 vols. Berkeley: University of California press, 1992.

Codex Nuttall/ A Picture Manuscript from Ancient Mexico. Ed. Zelia Nuttall. New Introductory Text by Arthur Miller. New York: Dover, 1975.

Coe, Michael and Justin Kerr. *The Art of the Maya Scribe*. New York: Abrams, 1997.

Coe, Michael. *Breaking the Maya Code*. NY: Thames & Hudson, 1992.

Coe, Michael. *The Maya Scribe and His World*. New York: The Grolier Club, 1973.

Dibble, Charles. "Writng in Central Mexico." *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, vol. 10. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971. 322-31.

Duran, Fray Diego. *The History of the Indies of New Spain*. Translated, annotated, and with an Introduction by Doris Heyden. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.

Edmonson, Munro S., ed. *Sixteenth-Century Mexico/ The Work of Sahagún*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974.

Elliott, J. H. *Imperial Spain/ 1469-1716*. New York: New American Library, 1977.

Fash, William. Scribes, *Warriors and Kings*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 1991.

Glass, John B. "A Census of Middle American Testerian Manuscripts." *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, vol. 14: "Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources." Part IV, 281-96.

Gruzinski, Serge. *Painting the Conquest: The Mexican Indians and the European Renaissance*. Tr. Deke Dusinberre. UNESCO: Flammarion, 1992.

Juan de Cordova. *Arte del Idioma Zapoteco*. Mexico: Ediciones Toledo, INAH, 1987.

Karttunen, Frances. "Nahuatl Literacy." *The Inca and Aztec States, 1400-1800*. Ed. George Collier, Renato Rosaldo and John Wirth. New York: Academic Press, 1982. 395-417.

Keber, Eloise Quinones. "Reading Images: The Making and Meaning of the Sahagúntine Illustrations." *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún/ Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Ed. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, H. B. Nicholson and Eloise Quinones Keber. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies/ The University at Albany, SUNY; distributed by University of Texas Press, 1988. 199-210.

King, Martin. "Hearing the Echoes of Verbval Art in Mixtec Writing." In *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo. Durham: Duke University, 1994. 102- 136.

King, Martin. "Poetics and Metaphor in Mixtec Writing." *Ancient Mesoamerica* 1 (1990): 141-51.

Klor de Alva, J. Jorge, H. B. Nicholson and Eloise Quinones Keber, eds. *The work of Bernardino de Sahagún/ Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies/ The University at Albany, SUNY; distributed by University of Texas Press, 1988.

Klor de Alva, J. Jorge. "Language, Politics, and Translation: Colonial Discourse and Classical Nahuatl in New Spain." *The Art of Translation: Voices From the Field*. Ed. Rosanna Warren. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989. 143-62.

Landa, Diego de. *Yucatan Before and After the Conquest* [*Relacíon de las cosas de Yucatán*]. New York: Dover, 1978.

Lockhart, James. *Nahuas and Spaniards/ Postconquest Central Mexican History and Philology*. UCLA Latin American Center Publications, University of California, Los Angeles: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Mâle, Emile. *The Gothic Image/ Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*. Tr. Dora Nussey. Harper & Row/Icon Editions, 1972.

Marcus, Joyce. "The Origins of Mesoamerican Writing." *Annual Review of Anthropology* (1976): 35-67.

Mignola, Walter D. "Literacy and Colonization: the New World Experience." *1492-1992: Re/Discovering Colonial Writing*. Ed. René Jara and Nicholas Spadaccini. Hispanic Issues 4. Minneapolis: the Prisma Institute, 1989.

Mignola, Walter D. "On the Colonization of Amerindian Languages and Memories: Renaissance Theories of Writing and the Discontinuity of the Classical Tradition." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34.2 (1992): 301-330.

Monaghan, John. "The Text in the Body, the Body in the Text: the Embodied Sign in Mixtec Writing." In *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo. Durham: Duke University, 1994. 87- 101.

Motolinía, Fray. *History of the Indians of New Spain*. Tr. & ed. Elizabeth Andros Foster. n.p.: Cortes Society, 1950.

Nicholson, H. B. "Phoneticism in the Late Pre-Hispanic Central Mexican Writing System." *Mesoamerican Writing Systems*. Ed. Elizabeth P. Benson. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1973. 1-46.

Pastor, Beatriz. "Silence and Writing: The History of the Conquest," tr. Jason Wood. *1492-1992: Re/Discovering Colonial Writing*. Ed. René Jara and Nicholas Spadaccini. Hispanic Issues 4. Minneapolis: the Prisma Institute, 1989.

Peterson, Frederick. *Ancient Mexico*. New York: Capricorn Books, 1959.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. "The Florentine Codex Imagery and the Colonial Tlacuilo." *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún/ Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Ed. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, H. B. Nicholson and Eloise Quinones Keber. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies/ The University at Albany, SUNY; distributed by University of Texas Press, 1988. 273-293.

Popol Vuh/ the Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings. Trans. Dennis Tedlock. New York: Simon and Shuster/Touchstone, 1996.

Prescott, William H. *History of the Conquest of Mexico and History of the Conquest of Peru*. New York: Modern Library, n.d. [orig. 1931].

Rabasa, José. "Dialogue as Conquest: Mapping Spaces for Counter-Discourse," *Cultural Critique* 6 (1987).131-159.

Robertson, Donald. "The Treatment of Architecture in the Florentine Codex of Sahagún." *Sixteenth-Century Mexico/ The Work of Sahagún*. Ed. Munro S. Edmonson. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974. 151-164.

Sahagún, Fray Bernardino de. *Florentine Codex/ General History of the Things of New Spain*. Ed. and trans. with notes by Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, 13 Parts [vols.], 2nd ed., revs'd. School of American Research, Monographs, No. 14. Santa Fe: University of Utah, 1975.

Sahagún, Bernardino de. *Primeros Memoriales/* Facsmile Edition. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.

Sahagún, Bernardino de. *Primeros Memoriales*. Paleography of Nahuatl Text and English Translation by Thelma D. Sullivan. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.

Schele, Linda and David Freidel. *A Forest of Kings*. NY: William Morrow, 1990.

Schele, Linda and Peter Mathews. *The Code of Kings: the Language of Seven Sacred Maya Temples and Tombs*. New York: Scribner, 1998.

Scheper, George L. "Re-Reading the 'Conquest of Mexico': Whose Story?" *Semiotics 1990*. New York: University Press of America, for The Semiotic Society of America, 1993. 195-210.

Tedlock, Dennis. "Writing and Reflection Among the Maya." 1992 *Lecture Series/ Working Papers No. 4*. Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Maryland, College Park, 1989.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Conquest of America/ The Question of the Other*, trans. by Richard Howard. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1987.

Valadés, Diego de. *Rhetorica Christiana*. Perusiae, 1579.

van der Loo, Peter. "Voicing the Painted Image: A Suggestion for Reading the Reverse of the Codex Cospi." In *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo. Durham: Duke University, 1994. 77- 86.

Watts, Pauline Moffitt. "Hieroglyphs of Conversion: Alien Discourses in Diego Valadés Rhetorica Christiana." *Memorie Domenicane*, N.S. 22 (1991): 405-52.

Wood, Stephanie. "The Cosmic Conquest: Late-Colonial Views of the Sword and Cross in Central Mexican Titulos." *Ethnohistory* 38.2 (Spring 1991): 176-95.

Zolbrod, Paul G. *Diné bahane'/ The Navajo Creation Story*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

CONSTRUCTING NATURE AND ORDERING SPACE / SPAIN AND MEXICO

Mary Ruth Donnelly

The comparison between European Spanish and urban Aztec cultures can be fruitfully examined in the light of Frederick Turner's *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness.* Turner's thesis is that the West's fierce tendency to exploit land as well as the indigenous people who live on it has its roots in Judeo-Christian tradition. This tradition, he maintains, grows out of the extremes of the Middle Eastern land itself, a land of vast desert with limited areas of fertility. The urban civilizations that grew up in these fertile areas hoarded them, its people looking out, demonizing the wilderness and those who inhabited it. The Israelites, he says, were nomadic wanderers in this desert until they settled, and their scriptures reflect the adversarial relationship between wilderness and civilization that grew in this environment. Turner traces the growth of Western exploitation of and alienation from wilderness and especially its expression in encounters with the "New World."

What Turner does not much discuss, though, is the attitude toward nature of non-Western urban cultures. The different wilderness ethics and beliefs of the European intruders and the semi-nomadic plains Indians of North America are easy to see. But the Aztecs, for instance, had a highly developed urban life. And like the Mideastern civilizations that Turner discusses, these cities grew up in fertile areas surrounded by vast areas of less fertile land. While Turner devotes pages to the ruthless overthrow of the Aztecs by the Spanish and their Nahuatl allies, he ignores the Aztec attitude toward land and wilderness. That, of course, was not the task he set for himself. The purpose here is to use Turner's model to gain some insight into a non-Western urban culture and to suggest that urban cultures, Western and non-Western, may have more in common than Turner and others have suspected. A long-term goal is to see if by cross-cultural, non-romantic inquiries of people's attitudes toward wilderness, some realistic, albeit small, contribution can be made to understanding the contemporary ecological situation.

I have extrapolated two models from Turner's work to use as test patterns: constructing nature and ordering space. The first grows out of Turner's suggestion that the Garden of Eden myth in Genesis is "a memory and a reflection of the desires of a nomadic group of the Near Eastern wilderness, recorded by a scribe after the people had become sedentary"(37). He continues, these wandering people "would have seen the gardens of the Mesopotamian cities as Paradise" and that "Eden is imagined... as one of those Mesopotamian walled gardens wherein various birds and animals were kept for scenic and sporting purposes"(37). Turner cites Paul Shepard who says that for city dwellers "These gardens...were... a formal recognition of the delights of nature, not in the raw or of itself, but a nature tamed, humanized, and walled about like the cities" (37). This can be called a "constructed nature."

In what seems a paradox, Turner sees what I am calling the "ordering of space" as a non-Western activity. The desire to enclose, shape, and limit space, he suggests, is one characteristic of a people whose mythology is not dead and provides "them with spiritual as well as spatial orientation, answer[s] the questions all humans pose of the uncharted spaces beyond experience. Spatially...their worlds remained closed, limited ones..."(92). Of the West, Turner paraphrases Oswald Spengler:

> space terrifies because of its cognate sense of annihilation, and one thinks of certain comforts to be had in circumscribed worlds, comforts either forgotten or else remembered only in dreams, accidents, or passions by the people of the West (92).

Though Spengler sees this drive to the safety of enclosure as non-Western, what are those walled versions of wildernesses called gardens and the medieval walled cities expressing of space if not the need to order, enclose, and tame it? However, Turner maintains that the journey across the Atlantic was one into uncharted space that non-Europeans had the technology to attempt but rarely did. In this, he says, the Western spirit manifested a desire to tackle the vastness of unbounded space.

Spain

Spanish written texts on the eve of conquest provide ample evidence that the attitudes toward wilderness Turner sees born in the Mid-Eastern desert are alive and well in fifteenth century Spanish culture. A description of a 1440 pre-nuptial celebration of a royal wedding in Castile provides an almost fantastic example of mid-fifteenth century Spanish construction of a tamed and artificial nature. Translated by Teofilo Ruiz, the account is as follows. At Briviesca the count of Haro threw a lush party, lasting several days to celebrate the arrival in Castile of the infanta, Dona Blanca of Navarre, to marry the infante, Don Enrique of Castile.

> On the fourth day, the "count had an immense room built in a large fenced meadow.... In this artificial hall, a very high stage was built, requiring twenty steps to ascend to the top. It was covered with grass to look like a natural mound.... There [the royal female guests] sat...on rich scarlet brocade.... Below them in lower artificial mounds covered with grass and rich tapestries sat the ladies and knights... (319).

Guests were provided with games in the enclosed meadow that included jousts, fishing in "a pond which had been specially stocked for the feast with large trout and barbels" which were brought to the princess when caught. "In another part of the meadow, there was a beautiful copse of trees...which the count had stocked with bears, boars, and deer. The wood was surrounded by almost fifty huntsman with 'gentle'...mastiffs, greyhounds, and hounds...in such manner that no animal was able to escape" (319). After these sports, the dancing began and "lasted almost all day. Everything was lit so well that is seemed to be illuminated by the midday sun" (319). Comment is hardly necessary on this elaborate construction of a tamed, fenced nature where hunting and fishing success is guaranteed and organized artificial mounds and light replace the more random originals.

Nor does one have to look far in Spanish medieval literature for the corollary, that wild nature can be expected to produce rough and uncivil beings. *In The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandián*, an historical fiction, Garci Rodrigues de Montalvo points to the griffins' obedience to their Amazon trainers as an example for Christians. The griffins, he says, "were raised in a rugged, brambly, and isolated place that conforms with their ferocity…" (465). These creatures "flew over Constantinople so covered with blood and so full of their own arrogance and cruelty," yet they returned to the women when called (465). He contrasts this to Christians who have had the advantage of being "born of reasonable men and women, raised and ruled by natural means" and thus who would be expected to be moral but are not (465). Those Christians, he suggests, have much to answer for.

As might have been predicted then by Turner's thesis, the Iberians, on the eve of conquest manifest a fascination with a constructed garden of plenty and a belief that wild, isolated places breed uncivilized, cruel beings. And though they live in the circumscribed spaces of walled cities and artificially constructed gardens, they, at least some of their number, will be venturing out, with newly adopted navigational instruments into uncharted, unbounded space. But what of the people that they find there?

Mesoamerica

The Aztecs were relative newcomers to power in the Valley of Mexico. Their mythology suggests that, like the Israelites, they were wanderers for generations in the wilderness, stopping occasionally only to find that their god Huitzilopochtli demands that they go further. Finally they arrive at the island in the lake where they establish their capital city, Tenochtitlan. Theirs is the last of a line of Mesoamerican urban cultures to dominate this fertile area, the Valley of Mexico. Tenochtitlan (now beneath the surface of Mexico City) was preceded in power by the cities, Teotihuacan and Tula among many others. These Mesoamericans based urban planning on their mythic beliefs about the cosmos. A brief summary of a few of them will suffice for a discussion of the influence of myth in urban planning. Because the creator couple had four sons who govern the four cardinal directions, cities are generally divided into quadrants. The earth is an island surrounded by the primal sea. Mountains are seen as full of water, a precious resource. Humanity was formed in a clay bowl; hence, basins, caves, particularly those with springs, reflect the birthplace of humanity. Alignment with celestial events also ties a natural or manmade object to the sacred. As María Elena Bernal-García puts it:

> In looking for the sacred environment proposed by

> the deities, Mesoamericans did not settle just anywhere where drinking water and /or proper land for cultivation was available. They searched, besides, for a landscape exhibiting the components of the Primordial Universe...(192).

When an element of the ideal landscape was missing, she adds, they built it (202). One of the most desirable features, she cites Angel Garcia-Zambrano as saying, was the *rinconada* or "corner of land," a valley circled by a mountain range, a hydraulic basin that was linked in their minds to "the sacred clay bowl from [which] humanity had originally sprung moments before the Fertile Earth acquired its maturity" (193-94). So the indigenous Mesoamericans were "searching for the Primordial Bowl where humanity was conceived" (194-95). The Nahuatl word *anahuac* contains the same notion, a valley, a bowl, filled with water or other precious resources (193).

Teotihuacan

Teotihuacan is just Northeast of present day Mexico City. This city, built on a grand scale, is said by Esther Pasztory to have been built using "nature itself, in all its awesome scale as [a] guide. [It] is planned on such a large scale that it invites comparison with the mountains and the plains..." (46). David Carrasco adds that there is "enough evidence in the shape and order of the city to see reflections of [Teotihuican's] cosmos and its design" (111).

The oldest and largest pyramid in Teotihuacan, the Pyramid of the Sun, is built over a sacred cave and springs. According to Doris Heyden caverns are "especially associated with creation" (14). Excavations have discovered that a paved canal surrounds the pyramid, perhaps having been filled with water, suggesting a mountain surrounded with water (Bernal-García, on-site presentation). Walking up the Avenue of the Dead, toward the Pyramid of the Moon, the Pyramid of the Sun is on the right; the thirty-foot wide Avenue is a mile and a half long, running north to south, and is lined with scores of small platforms and buildings (see Kubler 51). The Nahuatl word for street is "ravine in between houses." The Avenue of the Dead "conforms to the idea of a gully or ravine in between the higher mountain/pyramids..." (Bernal-García 224-25). It is "cut on a line along the axis of the entire valley between the two highest peaks of the mountain range..." (Carrasco 112). The road gradually rises and goes over a series of stiles. Viewed from this road at a distance, the Pyramid of the Moon seems to replicate the shape of the mountain behind it.

Up close in the plaza, the mountain is obscured by the pyramid, and the pyramid has, in a sense, become the mountain, as Bernal-García pointed out on site. While the pyramid is smaller than the earlier Pyramid of the Sun, its vast precinct is bigger. The approach to the pyramid is open on all sides, and neither the pyramids nor the city itself is walled or protected by defensive structures. Neither the scale nor the openness of design suggests the closed spaces Turner posits that non-Western, mythologically based cultures prefer.

Intersecting the Avenue of the Dead at about half its length and at a right angle is the San Juan River. Its once meandering course through the city was altered by the Teotihuacan planners to make it run straight across this avenue and through the city in an east-west direction (Pasztory 50). Thus, it serves to form the other central line that divides the city into its quadrants, helping the city conform to the mythological ideal.

After 250 AD, no more "colossal" architecture was built. Instead, "two thousand permanent habitations were constructed to house multiple families in what are called apartment compounds" (Pasztory 52). Enclosed, intimate spaces built away from the monumental ceremonial centers formed permanent living quarters for family or occupational groups. In the center of each square complex, generally, was an open area with a small, personal altar for worship. Lyrical murals of flowers, water, people, and animals were painted on the walls of Teotihuacan apartment complexes. Pasztory notes that these murals suggest Teotihuacan's inhabitants " were living in [a] paradise on earth which was, literally, the body of the Goddess" (55).

Tula

As the influence of Teotihuacan declined, that of Tula rose. The architecture was never on such a grand scale as that of Teotihuacan, but the influence of Tula is believed to have been as great (Carrasco 74). Carrasco's description of the setting of its main ceremonial centers demonstrates an interaction between nature and artifice. They are, he says, "constructed on a high treeless hill which had been artificially leveled to resemble a broad, basically square platform" (74). The natural hill has been leveled to look and perform more like a man-made pyramid, flat on top to accommodate temples and plazas. Since pyramids are said to have been conceived in imitation of natural mountains, is the Tula ceremonial center a mountain imitating a pyramid imitating a mountain?. Looking north, east, and west from here, he says, one gets the impression of being securely enclosed (74).

Tenochtitlan

The center of power of the Aztec or Mexica at the time of the Spanish entry was Tenochtitlan, capital of the Mexica empire. From there, their influence stretched to both oceans. The city, leveled by Cortez, was established on an island in a lake and connected by causeways to the mainland. It is divided, as might be expected, into quadrants. Thus it forms a microcosm of the universe, the island earth, and its four directions, surrounded by the primal sea.

In the middle of the city is the double pyramid/mountain of the Templo Mayor. The ruin is now located beneath the Central Plaza of Mexico City, the Zocalo and the adjacent area. Its remnants were rediscovered accidentally and have been partially excavated. This pyramid, Richard Townsend maintains, "represent[s] in microcosm the ecological components of the surrounding valley" (38). The south side of the dual structure "represented a mythological mountain, the magic scene of Huitzilopochtli's supernatural birth…" (40) and the north side is Tlaloc's shrine. He is the god of water and agriculture (46). "[T]he Indians of this region customarily spoke of mountains as being filled with water" (48).

The Frog Court is the courtyard before the Tlaloc temple. Sea serpents rim its patio. Johanna Broda explains that the Templo Mayor had imagery and numerous offerings of marine animals, which suggests that "the Aztecs wanted to conjure the presence of the sea at Templo Mayor. The sea was a symbol of absolute fertility embodied in water…" (101). Bernal-García adds that these offerings "turn Mexico-Tenochtitlan into the place of the original lake, the Primordial Sea" (201).

While the island on which Tenochtitlan was situated was the choice of Huitzilopochtli and was mythologically correct in its reproduction of the primal condition, its limited space eventually presented problems. When land to farm became scarce, the Mexica began to build *chinampas*, artificial islands formed by dredging the bottom of the lake and depositing the mud on reed mats floating in the lake. Eventually these became fertile farmlands—the "floating gardens" of Xochimilco. Trees were planted to root the structures in place. Today, miles of canals, the last remnant of the lake, crisscross the area between the *chinampas*, which are still in use.

Conclusion

The Aztecs and their Mesoamerican predecessors in the Valley of Mexico, on which the Aztecs based much of their culture, make an interesting comparison to the peoples of the West with their Judeo-Christian heritage. Both groups have highly organized urban civilizations. In the early days, the Israelites were a wandering people who, according to their scriptures, searched for a fertile area in the wilderness to settle, as did the Aztecs. The popular, romanticized view is that the Mesoamericans, once settled, unlike the Israelites of Turner's thesis, remained more in tune with nature. Their religion, their buildings, and their mythology seem to support the belief that they are a more "natural" people. However, a closer look reveals some unexpected similarities. As the Israelites who pictured the Garden of Eden as a Mesopotamian walled garden, and as the fifteenth century Castilian count who created an enclosed woods for the amusement of his royal guests, the Mesoamericans created and were comfortable in a constructed imitation of nature. It is not wilderness that they are longing for. If a city is "naturally" divided into quadrants because the creator couple had four sons and a river meanders through the city, it may seem "natural" to straighten it to make it an east-west line at a right angle with the carefully aligned north-south man-made avenue. Is this any different from the channelization and taming of the Mississippi and the ensuing loss of wetlands for the sake of barge navigation? Well, maybe, since the Teotihuacanos' channelization of the San Juan River was for purposes of making the river conform to a mythic cosmovision. Then what about raising the stakes of the comparison? If a people live on an island city and run out of farmland, is it "natural" to dredge the bottom of the lake and create artificial islands to increase arable land? This sounds uncomfortably like some of the West's practices.

My point is not to come out with an "ecologically correct winner" in these comparisons, but to say that "nature" and "wilderness" are ideas, intellectual constructs. Natural entities, and people are among them, are constantly interacting and affecting one another. The problem is far too complicated for overly romanticized generalizations about past cultures, and the artificial dichotomies imposed by Turner between Western and Non-Western attitudes about nature are neither entirely accurate nor are they particularly helpful. Wherever men and women settle down and begin to build permanent habitations and develop agriculture, they will accelerate their effect on the rest of nature. As they build large cities with monumental architecture and extensive living quarters, they will find themselves, to some degree, isolated from non-human nature. This isolation may produce a longing, a fear, or a mixture of both along with other emotions. Those complex feelings will be expressed in architecture, literature, or rituals, any of the manifestations of culture. These expressions probably have more in common among urban cultures than we have suspected.

*This paper was produced in part from materials and ideas generated by a 1998 NEH Summer Institute Center and Periphery in New Spain sponsored by The Community College Humanities Association.

Works Cited

Bernal-García, María Elena. "Carving in a Blue/Green Bowl: Mythological Urban Planning in Mesoamerica." Dissertation. U of Texas-Austin, 1993.

Broda, Johanna. "The Templo Mayor as Ritual Space" in The Great *Temple of Tenochtitlan: Center and Periphery in the Aztec World.* Johanna Broda, Davíd Carrasco, Eduardo Matos Moctezumain ed. Los Angeles: U of California Press, 1987.

Carrasco, Davíd. *Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire: Myth and Prophesies in the Aztec Tradition*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1982.

Heyden, Doris. "Caves, Gods, Myths: World-View and Planning in

Teotihuacan" in Mesoamerican Sites and World-Views, ed. Elizabeth P. Benson. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 1981.

Kubler, George. *The Art and Architecture of Ancient America: The Mexican, Maya, and Andean Peoples*. New York: Penguin, 1984.

Pasztory, Esther. "Teotihuacan Unmasked: A View Through Art" in *Teotihuacan: Art from the City of the Gods*. Ed. Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory. San Francisco. Thames and Hudson. 1993.

Rodriguez de Montalvo, Graci. *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandian*. Trans. William Thomas Little. Binghamton, New York: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992.

Ruiz, Teofilo, trans. "Preparations for a Royal Wedding (1440)" in Olivia Remie Constable, ed. *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.

Townsend, Richard Fraser. "Pyramid and Sacred Mountain," in *Ethnoastronomy and Ethnoarchaelolgy in the American Tropics*. Ed. A.V.Aveni (1988):37-62.

Turner, Frederick. *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers U. Press, 1992.

Kiva in the Cloister

Felix Heap

The Franciscan missions in New Mexico and elsewhere were begun during a violent collision between Europeans and native Americans. Against this backdrop and the spirit of the times, with witchcraft scares, religious wars in Europe, and exploitation of non European peoples, the Franciscans came to the New World with the idea of creating a new Eden. The mission system was part of a utopian dream by the Franciscans to civilize the natives, make them members of urban society, and enable them to function in the new type of world which was being forced upon them by Europeans. One aspect of the interaction between the native Americans in New Mexico and eastern Arizona is the question of religious syncretism, or mixing of religions.

Kiva in the Cloister: Religious Syncretism?

I am indebted to James Ivey, State Archeologist for New Mexico, who investigated some of the kivas inside convents that were originally built by the Franciscan friars in the 16th and 17th centuries.

> Kivas are usually underground rooms, either circular or square, that have a number of uses in Pueblo society. Some are associated with the katchina dances celebrated in various pueblos, while others are clan or social group meeting rooms. They are usually called *estufas*, sweatrooms, or hot rooms in the Spanish documents; this term is commonly translated as "council chamber" in English. Ramon Gutierrez says "The kiva . . . was the physical symbol of political society" in the pueblo; the political society of each pueblo was essentially a theocracy. A "convento" was the missionary residence; it was usually built against one wall of mission church. Although the typical convento plan varied somewhat among the missionary orders and changed through time, in general

> it consisted of a series of residential rooms, offices, workshops and storerooms arranged in a square around a central patio with other sheds, barns, granaries, corrals, and stables sometimes built to one side of the main convento. (Ivey 146).

The *convento* was based on the idea of the cloister in medieval monasteries. Monasteries were miniature cities in themselves; the plan for the attached cloister descended from the atria of Roman villas. The Spaniards, inheritors of the classical civilization of ancient Rome, believed that civilization is urban in nature and that people can become civilized only in an urban society, otherwise they are barbarians. The architectural model of the *convento* mirrors the attitude that civilization occurs only in an urban setting. The main parts were the church itself, derived ultimately from classical Roman basilicas which were used for civic and religious functions, and the cloister, an arcaded square attached to the church, a place for contemplation and reflection. The rest of the monastery consisted of supporting buildings, such as the refectory, infirmary and stables. The Franciscans in New Mexico attempted to reduplicate these forms in simpler structures—with one big difference in some of them: kivas.

Kivas found inside of Franciscan cloister areas or even inside the churches seems to be a clash of cultures. There is a kiva inside the patio area of the cloister at Quarai and Abo, New Mexico. Inside of the church itself there are several kivas under the altar at Awatovi, eastern Arizona. How did the pagan kivas get inside of the Christian cloisters? There have been two theories to explain this: one, that the Franciscans built their *conventos* around or over the kiva to show the triumph of Christianity over native religion. Against this Ivey points out that the kivas in the Awatovi church are untidily off center. The Franciscans were not concerned with building their altar directly on top of the pagan symbol so as to show the triumph of the Church. Against the theory that the Franciscans built their *conventos* around the kivas, Ivey shows that at Pecos the *conventos* and kivas were built at the same time since both used adobes salvaged from an earlier church (Ivey 129). At Quarai part of the kiva was constructed with Spanish adobe bricks which were unknown to the natives, nor was any ruin nearby to salvage bricks. "The bricks must have been made by or under the direction of the Franciscans, specifically to be used in the construction of the kivas" (Ivey 137).

The second theory is that the Pueblo Indians built their kivas in the missions at times when they were either permanently or temporarily abandoned to show the triumph of the native religion over Christianity, to reclaim their own past. Ivey notes that in the case of Awatovi, this theory is impossible, since the Christian altar was built on top of the kivas; clearly the kivas had to be there first. Against the theory that the kivas appeared after the conventos were abandoned, Ivey says that at Abo and Quarai the kivas seem to be constructed in an European manner. "Furthermore, both the Quarai and Abo convento kivas have been intentionally refilled. Since there is no reason for the Indians to have filled the kivas before they finally left the pueblo, this must indicate that the Franciscans were in residence at the time the filling occurred." (Ivey 133).

Ivey concludes by offering a third alternative: ". . . that the Franciscans did countenance the kivas in their conventos, and indeed, encourage them" (Ivey, 127). Ivey supports his views mainly by archeological data from the known kivas found in and under Franciscan buildings. He also argues that the historical records show that the Franciscans approached the native Americans with caution and conciliation (Ivey 127).

The strength of Ivey's analysis is his expertise as a historian and field archeologist. But his views can be supported from another direction: the character of the Franciscan Order itself, eclectic in philosophy, visionary, optimistic and utopian, despite the difficulties in New Mexico and the spirit of the times in general during the 16th-17th centuries. There are other examples from elsewhere that seem to show that rather than trying to stamp out native beliefs, many Franciscans utilized symmetries and parallels in belief and ritual to attract converts. In centuries of contact with pagan religions in Europe there was an attitude within Christendom that symmetries and parallels show that all truth is one. I believe this attitude was especially prominent among a number of Franciscans. The idea that all truth is one may be called "reading the Book of Nature"–realizing that natural wisdom is a source of truth harmonizing with Divine Revelation. At the time of the birth of Christ the pagan wise men, the Magi, announced "we have seen his star in the East..." (Matt. 2:2). They read the stars instead of the Scriptures. This episode was celebrated everywhere in Christian art. Another example of reading the Book of Nature is in the Sistine Chapel ceiling in Rome. The Franciscan pope, Julius II (1503-1513), commissioned Michelangelo to paint the ceiling (508-1512). Julius appointed a Franciscan theologian, Marco Vigerio, to act as theological advisor to Michelangelo. As the history of the world unfolds along the ceiling, Old Testament prophets in the side niches observe their prophecies unfold. Interspersed between the prophets Michelangelo depicted the sibyls prophesying the same thing from their reading of the Book of Nature. Thirty years later, from 1534-36, Michelangelo painted the rear wall of the Sistine chapel with the Last Judgment, in which the world will be consumed by fire. This event recalls the opening lines from the Latin poem, the "Dies Irae", attributed to Thomas of Celano, St. Francis' first biographer:

Dies irae, dies illa,
Day of wrath, O that day
Solvet saeculum in favilla
The world will be dissolved in ashes
Teste David cum Sibylla.
According to David and the Sibyl.

The execution of the Sistine ceiling coincides exactly with the first Franciscan foundations in the New World. Syncretism in this case may be described as the blending of religious images and ideas to harmonize old and new belief systems so as to avoid cognitive dissonance in the minds of the people affected. In the mission fields was religious syncretism tolerated and even abetted by the Franciscan friars? Hugo Nutini, (*Todos Santos in Rural Tlaxcala*), postulated that syncretism is a kind of acculturation which takes two basic forms: (a) "guided," which usually occurs in the violent confrontation of two cultures (e.g., Spanish and Aztec) in which the dominant culture adamantly forces its values as most important in the final syncretic synthesis. For example, Nutini (355) says the cult of the saints in Mexico has many pre-Hispanic elements, but its underlying ideology is essentially Catholic. The other form of syncretism is (b) "spontaneous," which occurs when there is structural or ideological symmetry, and in which the indigenous elements (e.g., in sculpture) are highly visible. Nutini states... "the friars strove to understand the religious outlook of the Indians and seldom forced orthodox Catholicism on them without a measure of self expressions"(90).

Why would the Franciscans be sympathetic to the idea of religious syncretism? The answer likes partly in the character of their founder, St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) who endeared himself to posterity by his love the natural world, his lack of theological speculation, his uncanny ability to commune with animals and his mystic experience involving union with nature. This has prompted admiration for Francis in modern times as the patron of ecology and books such as *St. Francis, Nature Mystic*, by Berkeley Professor Edward Armstrong.

The Franciscans inherited a love of the natural world which in the minds of many of them, may have included natural, or non-Christian wisdom. By the 16th century many of the Franciscan missionaries who were in the field (not in the universities) were not overly inclined toward speculation or analysis and may have been more accepting and sympathetic towards the native peoples. It is probable that the Franciscans tolerated the production of syncretic religious art in the decorations of churches and monasteries; that Indian artisans carved syncretic sculptures on Franciscan buildings perhaps on their own initiative, but were also abetted in some way by the friars. Carvings on the outdoor chapels at Huejotzingo and Calpan have Christian subject matter but the style is definitely tequitqui–European motifs, Indian style. The huge size of the swords piercing the body of the Virgin at Calpan create a flowery rosette (Plate 2). In Aztec culture flowers accompanied sacrifice. Xochipilli, the Flower Prince, was a handsome young man selected to stand for the people before being sacrificed. This may be alluded to by a native artist in the churchyard cross at Cuautitlan where the arms of the cross burst into flowers at the terminals. At Calpan on one of the capilla posas Christ appears in glory for the Last Judgment (Plate 3). His halo resembles the ruff of the savior god Quetzalcoatl at Teotihuacan (Plate 4).

Some carvings are accompanied by native time glyphs, a vital part of Meso American religion, and some may suggest attributes of native deities in a parallel Christian context. Day signs were controlled by various gods. Elizabeth Weismann (13) has noted a date stone on the Franciscan monastery at Tecamanalcho for 1589–five house; and 1591–seven reed. Perhaps we should look for Christian saints with the same attributes as the gods controlling those day signs.

The word *tequitqui* was coined by the Spanish art historian Jose Moreno Villa in 1941 to distinguish it from *mudejar*, evidence of Moorish style (Weisman 271). Some *mudejar* forms themselves come ultimately from India and seem to contain mystical numerical symbolism which was understood and employed by Muslims. Geometric forms generated by numbers not only had religious significance but they enabled Muslim artists to avoid idolatry by depicting images of living things. Franciscans sometimes used *mudejar* art.

The very discovery of America had something to do with the Franciscans and their contacts with Islam. Christopher Columbus spent time at the Franciscan monastery at La Rabida, not far from Seville and the Guadalquiver River where he set out for the New World. Columbus consulted with the very intelligent guardian of the monastery, Fray Juan Perez as well as Fray Antonio de Marcheno who were familiar with the navigational charts, astronomy, astrology and numerology of the Muslims. Columbus even built a small observatory on top of the friars campanile (Moorman, 578). Their influence undoubtedly steeled Columbus' will to go forward. The Franciscans had to know that Islamic designs were generated mathematically becoming geometric shapes which also had mystical significance. *Mudejar* design shows up frequently in early Franciscan foundations in Mexico, such as the arches at Tlaxcala (Plate 5). Mudejar geometric designs, mathematically generated, are also in the ceiling at Tlaxcala (plate 6).

The Franciscans in Mexico and New Mexico were Observants, the descendants of the Spiritual Franciscans. The Spirituals in their struggles to maintain the rigorous lifestyle of St. Francis, had adopted ideas from the apocalyptically minded Abbot Joachim of Flora. Not only did this lead them to believe they could establish a new Eden in the New World, but it also tended to involve them in numerology like Joachim himself. There was a natural affinity to *mudejar* geometry. This seems to be another form of religious syncretism. By the time the friars reached New Mexico many of their utopian dreams had tarnished but their willingness to use syncretism apparently had not. The archeological evidence uncovered by Jame Ivey seems to me to dovetail with this form of the Franciscan tradition.

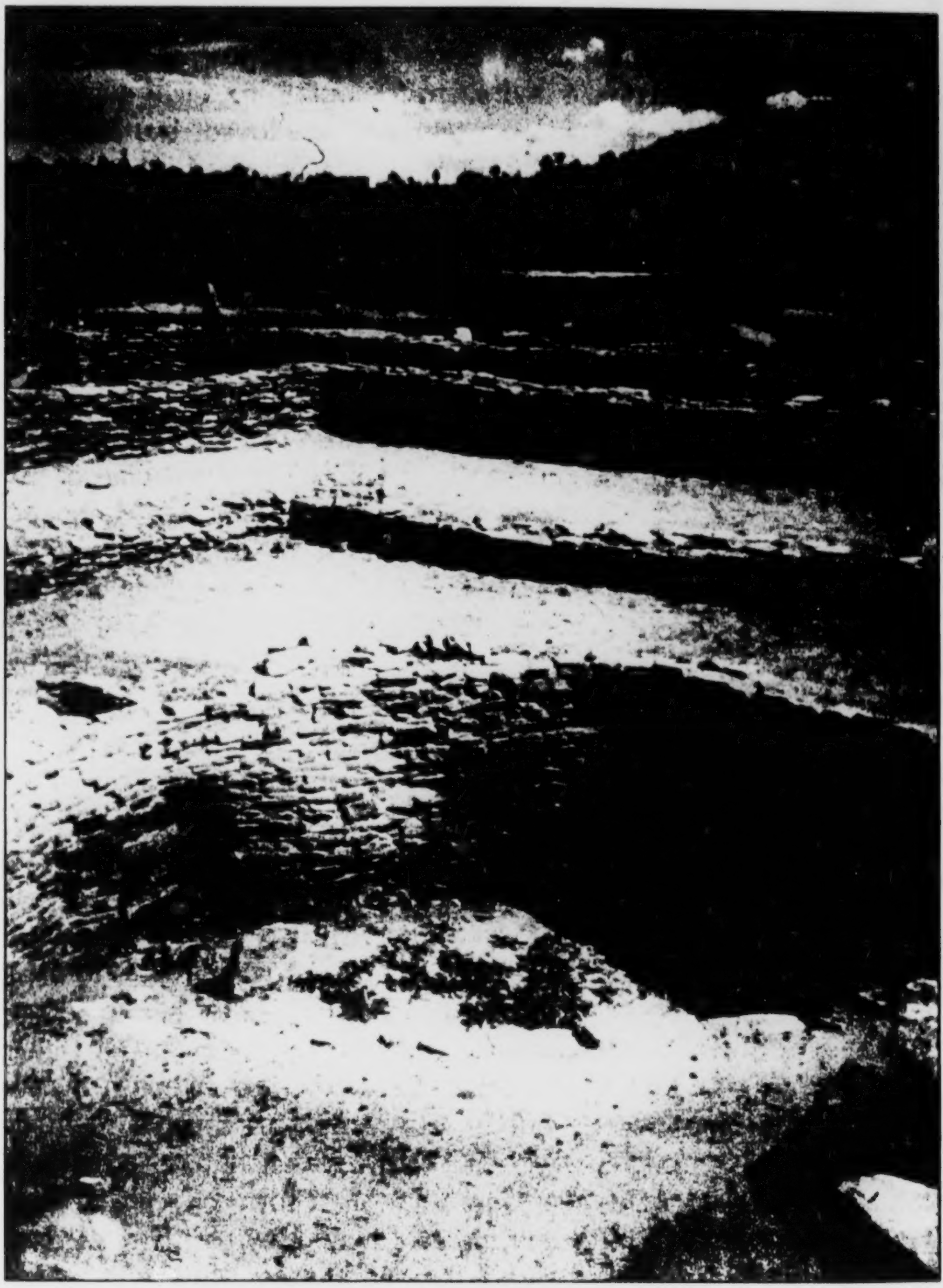


Plate 1
Kiva at Quarai Mission, New Mexico

Plate 2
Virgin of Seven Sorrows at Calpan, Puebla, Mexico

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Plate 3
Last Judgement, in *capilla posa* at Calpan, Puebla, Mexico

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

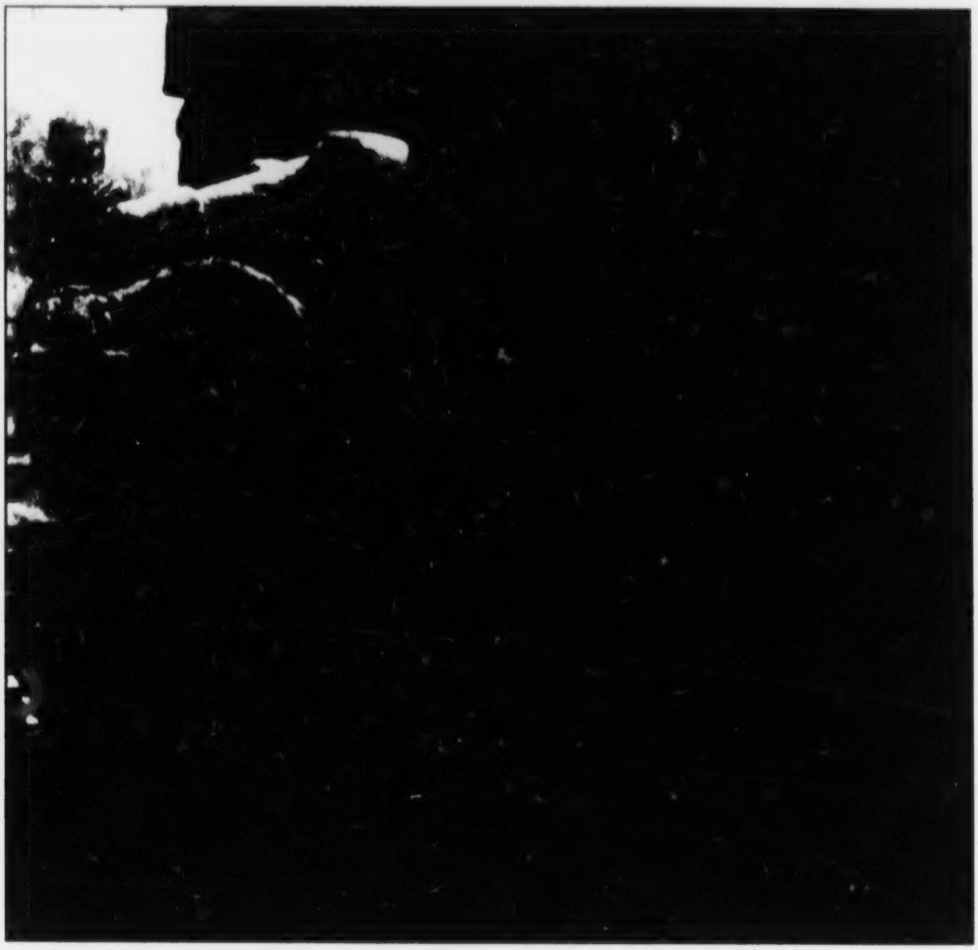


Plate 4
Pyramid of Quetzelcoatl at Teotihuacan, Mexico

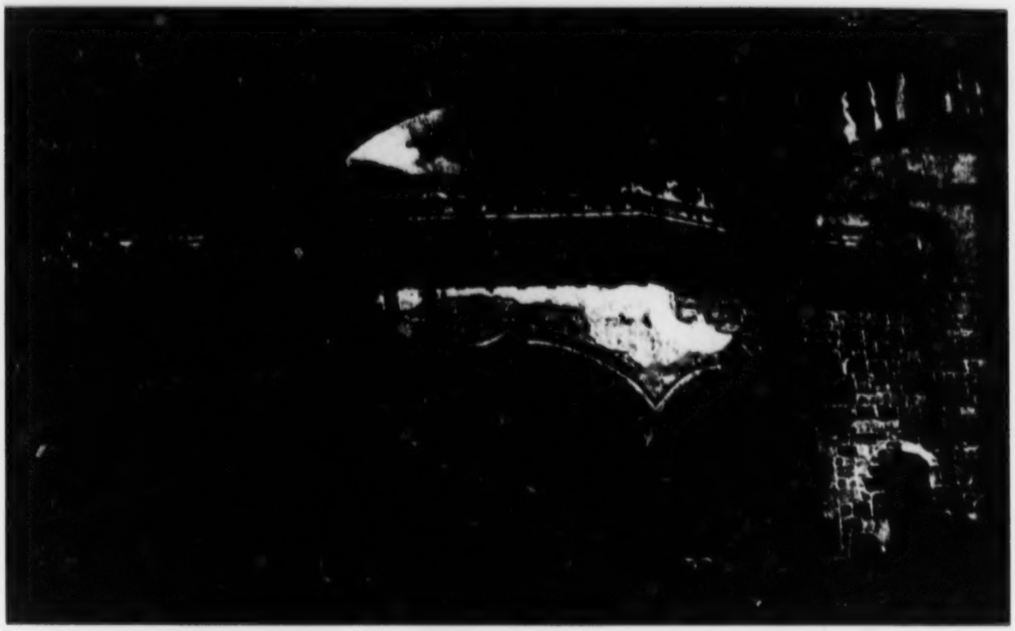


Plate 5
Mudejar Arches, Franciscan Convent at Tlaxcala, Mexico

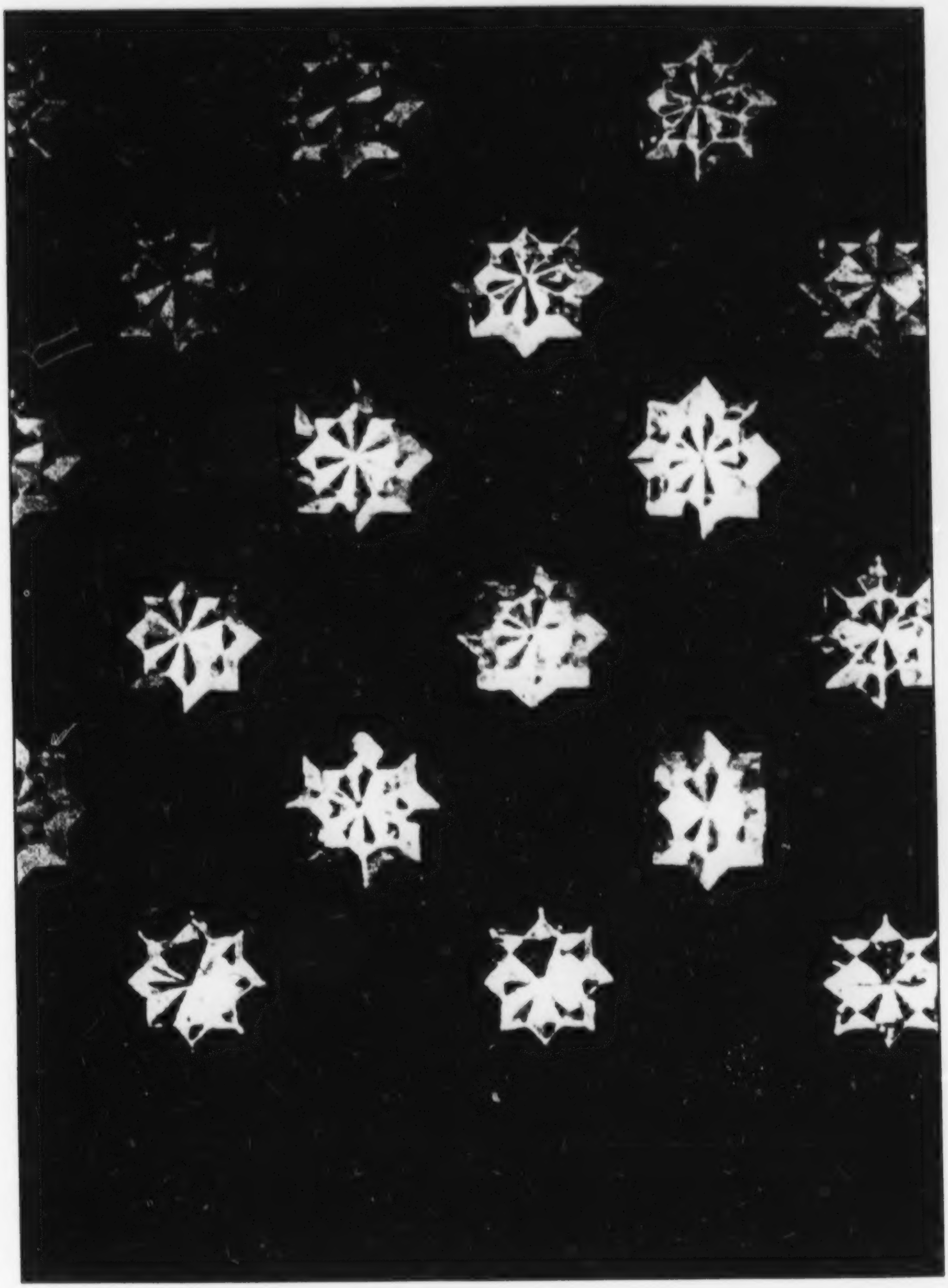


Plate 6
Mudejar Geometric Designs Ceiling of Franciscan Church,
Tlaxcala, Mexico

Works Cited

Actas de II Congreso Internacional sobre Los Franciscanos en el Nuevo Mundo, siglo XVI. Madrid: Deimos c.1987

Al-Andalus, *The Art of Islamic Spain*. Jerrilynn Dodds, ed., New York; Metropolitan Museum & Abrams, 1992

Albarn, Keith; Smith, Jenny Miall; Steele, Stanford; Walker, Dinah. *The Language of Pattern*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974

Artigas, Juan B. *Capillas abiertas Aislaladas de Tlacala*, Mexico: UNAM, 1985

Beato de Liebana. *Obras Completas*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1995

Guzman, Rafael Lopez; Medina, Lazaro Gila; Cuellar, Ignacio Henares; Tovar de Teresa, Guillermo. *Arquitectura y Carpinteria Mudejar en Nueva Espana*. Mexico: Azabache, 1992

Hitti, Philip K. *History of the Arabs*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970

Ivey, James E. "Convento Kivas in the Missions of New Mexico", *New Mexico Historical Review* 73.2 1998: 121-52.

Manzano, Rafael. *La Alhambra*. Madrid: Anaya, 1992

McAndrew, John. *The Open-Air Churches of Sixteenth Century Mexico*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969

McGinn, Bernard. *Apocalyptic Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1979

Moorman, John. *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1968

Phelan, John Leddy. *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*. Berkely and Los Angeles: University of California, 1970

Toussaint, Manuel, trans. *Elizabeth Weisman Colonial Art in Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas, 1967

Weisman, Elizabeth. *Art and Time in Mexico*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985

La Llorona, The Weeping Woman: The Sixth Portent, the Third Legend

RoseAnna Mueller

In the rare instances in which mothers kill their children, insanity is usually assumed to be the reason for this extreme violation of parental responsibility. A folk-legend which may have originated with the fall of Tenotchtitlan (present-day Mexico City) that persists in many parts of the Spanish-speaking world to this day offers another explanation for infanticide.

The legend of *La Llorona* (the Weeping Woman) is common to Mexico and Central and South America. It forms part of oral legend, but the story associated with this ghostly phenomenon is also reflected in literature, song, film, and in popular media. Although there is disagreement about the origin of the legend, the tale involves a female phantom who can be heard, although seldom seen, weeping and wailing. Among the many explanations given for her display of grief is that she mourns for her lost children, for whose death she is responsible. The motivations for the murders vary from vengeance for the husband who deserted her, the concealment of an illegitimate birth, the outright rejection of motherhood, the impediment of the child to a new relationship, her inability to provide for her children, and the choice to see her children die a swift death rather than to witness their prolonged suffering.

In other versions of the legend *La Llorona* is not a murderer, but rather a negligent mother who inadvertently causes her children's death. Sometimes she is a blameless mother who has lost her children to a tragic accident, or the children are the victims of malevolent actions she is powerless to stop.

La Llorona is doomed to wandering endlessly while she weeps in search of her children. As a phantom woman she is most often reported heard wailing near bodies of water, since in the most common version of the legend she has drowned her children. In this case, she functions as a cautionary figure whom parents, usually mothers and other female relatives, find useful to warn children away from the danger of lakes, rivers, and streams.

In another manifestation, *La Llorona* does not weep, but rather she appears alone at night and lures men into following her, with tragic consequences for her pursuers. In this instance, she is related to mythical siren figures and other phantom temptresses. In this manifestation she may be linked to a separate being with pre-Columbian sources. Some scholars see a resemblance to the Aztec deity Cihuacoatl or "Snake Woman."

The legend is also associated with the Conquest of Mexico. Both the *Codex Florentino* and Munoz Camargo's *Historia de Tlaxcala* include the wailing woman as the sixth omen or portent which predicted the fall of Tenochtitlan. It was reported that on the eve before the fall of the Aztec capital, a woman was heard crying, sobbing and sighing throughout the night, asking what would become of her children.

Chapter one of the *Codex Florentino* describes the sixth portent which predicted the disaster: "Suddenly a woman who was crying and screaming could be heard, as she wailed through the night, crying out as she passed by, 'My much beloved children, the time of our departure is at hand.' From time to time she would cry, 'My much beloved children, where can I take you?'" (Baudot and Todorov 81, my translation). In Book II of *La Historia de Tlaxcala*, "the sixth portent and sign was that many times during the course of many nights the loud voice of a weeping woman who almost drowned in her own tears, with sobs and sighs, could be heard crying, 'Oh, my children, we are about to lose everything,' and at other times she would say 'Oh, my children, where can I take you and hide you?'" (Baudot and Todorov 246, my translation).

A sonnet written in the second half of the nineteenth century by the Mexican poet Manuel Carpio may be the earliest published reference to *La Llorona*. She is also (but mistakenly) identified as the remorseful spirit of doña Marina, or La Malinche, Cortes's mistress and interpreter, by whom she had a child. It was erroneously reported that Malinche had killed this child. In this instance, doña Marina's association with *La Llorona* reinforces Malinche's role as betrayer to the Mexican people, thus raising larger issues of loyalty and ethnic identity.

Along with la Malinche, who represents the betrayer of her people, and the Virgin of Guadalupe, who is considered the Second Eve and redeeming mother, both male-imposed "official legends," *La Llorona* forms part of "the Third Legend" of Mexico (Limon). *La*

Llorona is the subversive phantom woman whose tale is largely transmitted through oral narrative by women. In another version, "*La Llorona* of the Moon" the phantom emerges on the first night of the full moon to gather evil souls (Avila).

The legend of *La Llorona* has been updated. In Sandra Cisneros's *Woman Hollering Creek*, the creek is named for *La Llorona*, and in this novel and in her other writings Cisneros presents the restrictive lives of women who suffer social injustice and male dominance and are victims of cultural and linguistic barriers. In a lecture, Cisneros once explained that she "writes about the ghosts inside that haunt me, that will not let me sleep, of that which even memory does not like to mention" (quoted in Doyle 53). Cleofilas is the disadvantaged protagonist of *Woman Hollering Creek*. She lives near the river called *La Llorona*, and like the river which never ceases flowing, the suffering of the women in the novel never comes to an end.

In the children's story, *Prietita and the Ghost Woman*, Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldua transforms the motif so that the weeping woman becomes a beneficent being who comes to the aid of a young Mexican-American girl who becomes lost while she is searching for an herb to cure her sick mother. Recently, feminists have reexamined the basis of the legend and have come to interpret the tale as populist propaganda intended to reinforce the patriarchy. In all versions, the father of the dead children suffers no consequences while the woman gets punished for her sin of sexual gratification or female subversion.

The writer Cordelia Candelaria grew up in New Mexico in the 1940's and 1950's and recalls hearing tales of *La Llorona*. She doubts the tale's power to scare us, now that our contemporary society may have become inured to the commonplace fact of mass murders and child abuse. Nevertheless, Candelaria concedes that what she heard about the tale as a child is unforgettable, and the threat of *La Llorona's* presence always managed to quiet her and her seven siblings. Candelaria's mother would silence her brood with tales of *La Llorona*. She told her children that the *bruja* (witch) missed her children so badly that she roamed looking for any children to replace them, and that they themselves just might be the next victims (Candelaria, 111).

Other variants of the legend Candelaria recalls were designed to control female sexuality. Adolescent girls were cautioned against having sexual relations with the opposite sex, and were warned that if they were disobedient to their parents and were seduced and abandoned when they became pregnant, they would be doomed to repeat *La Llorona's* sad fate if they gave up their babies. Other variations on this topic flourished during the Korean War. Wives who had affairs which led to the birth of illegitimate children while their husbands were fighting abroad would also come to *La Llorona's* end.

The legend of *La Llorona* persists because its variations reflect everyday reality. The legend has continued into modern times and in California and other parts of the southwest United States teenagers incorporate elements of the folk tale into ghost stories that use real neighborhood references. University of Illinois at Chicago graduate student Jeri Lynn Reed contributes: "This legend is very much alive. I have heard more than one version in Southern California, where I grew up, told especially by teenagers as a ghost story. One was in a neighborhood near a big graveyard in Whittier, the other in a neighborhood by the railroad tracks in Colton, near Riverside. The stories were told using real neighborhood references, as if this was something that happened in modern times."

Reed heard various versions of the story as a teenager and young adult, but was unaware that there was a historical tradition behind it. For her, the story always had a place-specific setting.

> One version I remember was set in a somewhat isolated housing project near the train yards in Colton (near Riverside) that scared me half to death even though I was in my late '20's at the time. My neighbors would point out the spot on the street under the streetlight where they could see *La Llorona* and hear her screaming at night, weeping for her children.

Sometimes they also heard her when she came up to the porch to look for her children, whom she had drowned. I was told she had three children. What made the story so scary for this informant was that it was never set in an imaginary place. Reed also heard other versions of the story in the early '70s. These were told by teenagers, who claimed the apparition took place in a huge graveyard near

Whittier, California. Reed recalls that there were several versions of the story, all involving alleged wild parties in the graveyard.

Evelia Rodriguez's grandmother was born and raised in Durango, Mexico. Rodriguez offers this about her grandmother: "She believes *La Llorona* was used to scare the children and make them behave. It was a superstitious way to discipline children instead of spanking them or grounding them." Rodriguez attends Columbia College Chicago and travels frequently to Mexico to stay in touch with her relatives. When she telephoned her grandmother to ask about this project, her grandmother's first question was, "Who's trying to threaten you and frighten you at the college?"

Rodriguez's maternal grandmother Zavala was born and raised in Guadalajara, Mexico. "Grandmother Zavala said that *La Llorona* was a woman who aborted her children. She was afraid to have children because she had an abusive husband and she was afraid he would in turn abuse the children. When she died she could not rest in peace because of her crime. She would roam around Mexico City looking for her children. When children were told about *La Llorona*, they would listen and behave because the story frightened them. It was a way to teach children that they should listen to their elders."

Perhaps the clearest connection to La Llorona and the dangers of water was contributed by Columbia College student Noe Vazquez, who made the legend the basis for one of his reports for the "Latin American Art, Literature and Music" class I teach. Vazquez held the class in his thrall as he repeated what his grandmother had told him. She said that *La Llorona* is refused access to heaven until she can bring her murdered children's bones to God. She roams the rivers looking for the bones. Tired of hearing her children crying for food, or because of the beatings she inflicted on them, she put them in a sack and threw them in the river. He reports,

> When my dad was 11 or 12 he lived in Villa Union, Mexico, with my grandmother, since his parents were divorced. It's about an hour and a half from Eagle Pass, on the U.S. border. Little rivers used for irrigation ran behind the houses, and these small rivers connected to a larger river which ran into a lake outside town. But water ran through the main river only several times a month. One night, when

> the moon was full, my dad heard a high-pitched wailing. When he asked my grandmother what the sound was, she told my dad to cover his ears and get under the bed. She did the same thing, since she knew it was *La Llorona*. She told my father that if you listen to her long enough, you will die. After that, my father was careful not to go near rivers at night.

La Llorona or the Weeping Woman is proof of a thriving oral legacy whose roots may be based in the devastation that accompanied the fall of Tenochtitlan. In my interviews and research I have found that most Mexicans believe that *La Llorona* was the phantom woman who appeared on the night before the fall of the Aztec capital. Chicanas and feminists re-invent the story so that *La Llorona* helps those in need, as in Gloria Anzaldua's children's tale. Or she is seen as a suffering mother whose actions should be interpreted as "a tender mercy," as Candelaria posits. Whether or not listeners are aware of the tradition and its history, what persists to this day is the story's wide geographical range in the Spanish-speaking world, its power to frighten adults and children alike, and its ability to make children behave.

The legend of *La Llorona* also lives through contemporary recordings made by Nana Mouskouri, Joan Baez, Los Caifanes, and Oscar Chavez. She is the subject of many mariachi songs, and she lends her cautionary tale to contemporary plays, films, and videos.

Works Cited

Anzaldua, Gloria. *Prietita and the Ghost Woman*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1995.

Arora, Shirley L. "La Llorona." *Encyclopedia of Mexico: History, Society, and Culture*. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997. 753-54.

Avila, Alfred. *Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest*. Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1994.

Baudot, Georges and Tzvetan Todorov. *Relatos aztecas de la con quista*. Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1983.

Candelaria, Cordelia. "Letting La Llorona Go: Or Re/reading History's Tender Mercies." *Heresies* 7 (1993). 111-15.

Doyle, Jacqueline. "Haunting the Borderlands: La Llorona in Sandra Cisneros's "Woman Hollering Creek." *Frontiers* 16 (1996).

Limon, Jose. "La Llorona, the Third Legend of Greater Mexico: Cultural Symbols, Women, and the Political Unconscious." *Between Borders: Essays on Mexicana/Chicana History*, ed. Adelaida R. del Castillo. Encino: Floricanto Press, 1990.

Miller, Elaine K. *Mexican Folk Narrative from the Los Angeles Area*. Austin: University of Texas press, for the American Folklore Society, 1973. 99-10

The Liminal Space of Desire in the New Poetry of Alma Luz Villanueva

César A. González-T.

Our hearts' desire to know and to love ever more is preeminently the human stance. This questioning, yearning to transcend our limits distinguishes us from the beasts of the forest and the grass of the fields. Our primal inclination is ever (forever) to be. It is a sixth proof inside of us of our affinity to something beyond just stuff. This is, literally, that other "stuff" that dreams and myth and meaning are made of—the archetypal, the geometric outlines of our human experience.

At the heart of the work of Alma Luz Villanueva, we find such desire. Beyond a fierce will to survive and a determination to rise above adversity, she reveals a transcendent yearning. The epigraph to her fifth book of poetry, *Desire*—just published by the Bilingual Press at Arizona State University, Tempe—reveals this stance. The quote is from one of Sidonie Gabrielle Colette's (1893-1954) last books, *Belles Saisons: A Colette Scrapbook*, written when Colette was in her eighties: "Everything I want ... but even that would not be enough." Villanueva transcends death in at least three ways: Not only has she survived the terrors of the night and the edge of the abyss in growing up, but she has also risen above the nihilism of post-modern despair through her successive resurrections of herself, the rebirthing of her innocence. Finally, although she does not see herself as being "above and independent of the universe," she does see herself embedded in nature's pascal rites of renewal, destined for transformation ("Transcendence").[1]

Alma Luz Villanueva is a novelist, essayist, and writer of short fiction who lives in Santa Cruz, California. Her first novel, *The Ultraviolet Sky,* has the distinction of being listed among *Five Hundred Great Books by Women*, edited by Erica Bauermeister and others (Penguin)—a list of notable books written by women from the thirteenth century to the present. *Naked Ladies*, her second novel sensitively "explores a variety of relationships: interracial, heterosexual and homosexual," writes Los Angeles Times reviewer, Veronica Chambers. Villanueva's current novel *Luna*, about a character with four life possibilities, is in preparation.

I characterize Villanueva's vision as liminal because she stands with us on critical thresholds of the being and nothingness of our human experience. Like Janus, the god of the door, looking inward and outward, she tends the gate of a broken humanity ever needing a mending center.

Forever seeking the sun, she is like Quetzalcóatl—Venus—the Nahuatl flying serpent, the morning star, the evening star, whose colors are red and black, the color of dawn, the color of night, alpha and omega, beginning and end—the god of wisdom. Balanced on critical thresholds, throughout her own life, she continues her ritual re-creations. In her poem "Pulse," she tells us,

> I wish to plant sunflowers,
> immense faces toward the sun,
> . . . .
> To be empty and be filled . . .
> . . . .
> . . . with darkness.
> . . . with light.
> . . . .
> I trust the color yellow:
> desire, fulfilled—
> desire, unfulfilled.
> O, endless desire:
> empty/full empty/full.
> I trust my desire,
> endlessly. (22-25)

As we stand poised on the threshold of this century's end, hers is a necessary voice. She tells us, as individuals and as nations, to stop despairing. She addresses our minds and our hearts: truth and love must abide because of, not, as too often happens, despite us. In a special way, she addresses women and *las cosas de las mujeres*, the realities of women—their suffering and their power to restore life to what men have destroyed. In her poetic voice we sometimes hear a brimming of emotion, always a returning-to-center, somehow-there power to endure. Villanueva gets a firm grip on our elbow and encourages us, individually and collectively, to rise, again and again: there is meaning, there is purpose. She is one of us, laden with all the faults and knots. She, too, has achieved some measure of mental and spiritual maturity through the good times and the bad. She speaks our language; she can be loud and rowdy and bawdy, too. In her poetry, we experience that paradoxical feeling that José Ortega y Gasset describes as the feeling of being plagiarized.[2] Her poetry nourishes us with this wisdom, bred of life.

Villanueva, a Chicana writer,[3] is in the nomenclature of the moment, multi-racial—born in Santa Barbara, California, of an immigrant Mexican mother and a blonde, blue-eyed German-English father whom she never met. Her maternal grandfather was "Mexican (*mestizo*, mixed-blood, Spanish and Yaqui), and her grandmother, Jesús Luján de Villanueva, was a full-blood Yaqui Indian" (*Autobiography* 299-300). Alma Luz's mother was focused elsewhere; she became a motherless daughter. Her grandmother, Jesús Luján, became her mother, her Mamacita.

In a segment of "California Poppy," her long closing poem of *Desire*, she sings us her song of herself:

> I was born in California, beautiful,
> holy, so sacred California.
> I was poor in California, and hungry
> in California. I have stolen food as
>
> a child in California.
> I stole baby clothes when I was pregnant at 15 in California.
> I was punished for speaking Spanish
>
> in school when I was 6 and learned
> to speak English in California, in California.
> All my children—born when I was 15, 17,
> 21, 36—were born in sacred California.
>
> My 2 grandchildren were born in
> holy, so sacred California.
> I've been on welfare in California.
> I've been married in California.
>
> I've been unmarried in California.
> I've been beaten in California.

I've been raped in California.
I've been healed in California, yes,

in this beautiful, holy, oh so sacred
California. I learned to write in English,
hearing my grandmother's voice, voices of my
ancestors, in sacred California.
. . . .

In second grade, Villanueva was struck brutally on the hand with a ruler by a teacher. "Large, raised, blood-red welts rose on my hands," Villanueva writes in her autobiography, "making Mamacita furious. … I stayed home from school until the fourth grade… ." (303) When Alma Luz left school, her grandmother, a Christian woman like her Baptist minister husband, became her mother and her teacher. Villanueva recalls how, during the church Christmas pageant, Mamacita read poetry so dramatically:

. . . .
You play death.
You are death.
You quote long stanzas from a poem I've
long forgotten; even fitful babies hush
such is the power of your voice,
your presence
fills us all.
(*Three; Autobiography*, "To Jesús Villanueva,
with Love," 303).

Before Mamacita died—when Villanueva was ten—her grandmother had given her tools for survival: a poet's enduring sense of wonder, and a sense of the importance of dreams passed down mother-to-mother through the generations. From the beginning, poetry has saved my life, she says in an unpublished Prose Statement on Poetry. If poetry would save Villanueva's life; dreams would center her poetry.[4] When her grandmother died, she rode a city bus in San Francisco "for about a week or so" and wrote poems about the people she saw on the bus (*Autobiography* 304). None of the poems survived, but she did.

Growing up pretty much on her own, tenement-smart and streetwise, at age twelve, she would tentatively come to know a next door neighbor, Claire Lewis McSpadden—nicknamed "'Whitey' … because of his white-blonde hair" (*Autobiography* 304). Villanueva speaks of Whitey as her real father. Ironically, "my biological father [also] had blue eyes and blonde hair," she writes (Letter/typescript 16).

After Mamacita's death—her transformation, Villanueva calls it—the little girl was essentially on her own. Life experiences almost kicked every star out of that child's sky. One night when she was pregnant at fourteen with her first child, Antoinette, she climbed to the top of a building under construction and looked into the abyss. But she stepped back (*Autobiography* 307). Again and again throughout her life, she would return into the circle of life. Her grandmother's wisdom and love, to this day, has given her what she needs to survive the terrors of the night and the edge of the abyss. After Marc, her third child, was born, her abusive marine husband, father of her three children, told her that "he was seeing men"; shortly thereafter, he would step out of their lives. She would have to look out for herself. "To this day," she says, "I sleep with my large, sharp buck knife when alone or backpacking" (*Autobiography* 312). Again she faced a time of transformation; again she would have to raise herself up, re-member herself. In her collection of poems *Mother, May I?* she tells us in poem 22.

> When she left this man she thought
> she'd die.
> But she didn't. She thought
> the sun would go out.
> But it didn't.
> And she heard a voice, distant
> and small, but
> she heard it.
> And her mouth opened slightly
> and a word spilled out. The word
> was 'I'.
>
> Inside
> I am here. (do

you hear me?) hear
me. hear me.
I am here. (pleading)
I am here. (teasing)
I am here. (taunting)
I am here. (simply)
I am here.
(From *Mother, May I?* rpt. in *Autobiography* 310)

Marisa Mendóza, an avid reader of Villanuevas works, writes:

> On her journey to transformation, she has painfully endured the stages of shame, hopelessness, and anger. She has relearned her possibilities and place in society, and now she knows better. She knows that life can include love and healthy relationships, that marriage can be based on love and respect, that children can be conceived out of joy. All of these possibilities were never open to her until she came to the point that she understood herself enough to dream for more, to expect more. As she relearns the rules, or lack thereof, of relationships between men and women, she teaches her sisters. She, in a sense, gives them the permission to dream for more, to expect more. (15-16)

But awful, awful things happen to us not only as individuals, but also as communities. As individuals and nations we do awful, awful things to one another. We, too, the people of the world, seem forever teetering on a roof edge in the night, flirting with the spirit of post-modern despair bred of a loss of faith in human reason, depleted by World Wars, genocide, and the threat of atomic annihilation. In the face of the destructiveness of nations and of the inhumanity of our kind, she explores the complex enduring power of the human spirit to survive and to affirm and to abide. Her poetry is at once paradigm and sometimes personal profile of the human condition. What she has to say matters, must be heard by her "Dear World"—the title of the fourth group of her poems in *Desire*.

Hers is an enduring faith in the ultimate goodness of the human spirit, in the spirit of Ghandi and of Martin Luther King. In her poem "An Act of Creation," dedicated to César Chávez, she confronts this conundrum:[5]

They keep rounding them up
through the centuries, killing
the innocent, so easily—

the babies, the children
the screaming mothers—
the men who do not beg

for mercy. Yes, yes, they
keep rounding up the victims,
. . . . . .
A stubborn man fasts for
the farm workers—their children
are not born whole, and ours
will not be born whole. That

is an act of creation
. . . .
. . . Yes, I understand

why the stubborn man
does not eat, pretending
to be a lamb, inviting
the wolves to feast
upon his sweet, brown

flesh. His spirit. (20-21)

The anonymous epigraph of Villanueva's last poem in *Desire*, titled "November 30, 1997, Dear World," reiterates the subtext of her collection, if not of her writing: "The first innocence is given, the second is chosen." She calls us again to life. We must not allow evil to overwhelm us. "Dear World" assaults our complacency with a tragic ironic inversion, where the heinous becomes as common as butterflies:[6]

Who are the guilty?
. . . .
Who are the innocents?

While certain dictators dream of
invisible viruses . . . .

While the young skinheads in Denver hate
a man from West Africa so much, they
kill him because his skin is the color of
pure dreams and the sun's light loved him.

. . . . .

While a 22-year-old student named Lara,
in Venezuela, is held in jail because
she speaks out for simple freedom—
. . . .

. . .where torture and rape is as common

as sunlight, moonlight, starlight, the songs
of birds, the flight of rainbow butterflies,
the child's first step, the child's first
smile, the child's first laughter, first

delight, and cries of hunger, discomfort,
quickly stilled by the rounded, full breast,
warm arms, soothing heart beat we all
remember from the innocence of the

womb.
. . . .
. . . While the Universe waits
for us to listen, we are
forgiven and loved,
loved and forgiven.

. . . .

While a 14-year-old girl
named Anne Frank witnessed

cruelties I'll never know, daily, nightly,
in a German concentration camp . . .
. . . .

on July 15, 1944 (3 months before
I was born, still in the womb, listening),

this 14-year-old girl wrote:
". . . in spite of everything I still believe
people are good at heart." At heart.
In the heart. In the womb.
. . . . (170)

In the spirit of Anne Frank, Villanueva tells us in her autobiography, "I'm compassionate (and, I think, kind) … . Learning to trust the Earth, the natural (native) goodness of most people (all people are born with it—I don't believe in original sin'—I believe in 'original innocence') has made me a fierce warrior and lover of my life, and all life" (312). In this sense, the second innocence is chosen, that is, created by not yielding to the temptation against the Holy Spirit, which is to despair of love. Hers is the spirit of the Talmud that teaches the spirit of *Tikkun Olam*—the repairing of the world: We are not charged with finishing the task, but neither may we ever withdraw from it.

This turning toward life lies at the heart of her poem "Dear World," *Winter Sun*, December 3, 1995, in which she quotes President Clinton's words

. . . walking
with soldiers in Germany
before they leave for Bosnia—

"We cannot stop

All war for all time, but
we can stop some wars.
We cannot save all women
and children, but we can save

many of them. We can't do
everything, but we must do
what we can . . . The terrible
war in Bosnia is such a case."

I am a woman who despises
the machinery of war . . .

. . . .

sick in my soul, hearing
the stories of the dead
children, the rape of women
the torture of men,

the innocent dead,
the innocent dead.
And I am proud that my
president wants to weep. (137)

If we allow the evil that we experience in our lives and in the world to overwhelm us, we surrender to the cynicism of post-modern exhaustion; we just don't care anymore. And by all rights this woman should be dead, body and spirit; she should have irretrievably lost her innocence. But dreams have centered Villanueva's poetry, and poetry has saved her life, as have her four children. Villanueva, warrior and lover of life, has chosen her second innocence. Adult "reality" has not destroyed her sense of wonder and her belief in love. She "listens to [her] dreams" as Mamacita taught her (*Autobiography* 312). "When I began to fly in my dreams," she writes, "[Mamacita] encouraged me, telling me how to navigate that terrain. (In this culture the child who tells such things to the adult is told 'it's only a dream,' pretend, fantasy; they clip their wings in short)" (Letter).[7]

Villanueva tells us that she keeps a journal of dreams; the oneiric, the stuff of dreams, permeates her work. Her indomitable, childlike sense of wonder and dreaming are critically related because dreams are at the great threshold, that place of desire where all things are possible, where desire has full sway. Chicano novelist Rudolfo Anaya tells us that "the dream is the flight of the soul" (González-T., "Interview" 460). My wife, with a woman's intuition, says: "Dreams are wishes of the heart." In the spirit of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin,[8] Villanueva sees a convergence of this potential for affirmation happening on a planetary scale: "I believe we are learning to dream together again even by the process of our 'online computers' linked to one another. We are slowly but surely becoming a global village, one species on planet Earth. Whether we like it or not, evolution is unfolding as it should; and I say this to myself when I face the daily news… ." (Letter)

In an unpublished poem "Pollen," dated July 1998, she sees innocence chosen in the work of other poet survivors:

I'm a 53 year old
teenager in love with
the world. . .
. . . .

My 17 year old son and I
pull at the wishbone-
I win, but say,
"I hereby give you

half - half for you and
half for me." We laugh
and dance to his loud
punk music (I can barely

tolerate, but I dance
anyway to the Spirit
of Dance). My teenager,
my last and final

teenager. Now, I must

become my own teenager–
fearless, furious, ridiculously
ALIVE Spirit of Dance.

(I am a ripe, red plum.
The mystery has devoured me.
I grow slowly in the
Womb of the Mystery,
. . . .

The sunflowers on the table
rained yellow yellow
pollen
on the faces of my ancestors:

Frida Kahlo, Federico Garcia Lorca.
Their faces on my books.
They stare at me.
Covered in yellow yellow

pollen.
Oh, my ancestors, speak:
tell me your wisdom.
Tell me your truths.

[They answer:]

"Okay, I'll admit it-
in spirit I'm a teenager
who loves to dance and eat
the reddest, ripest plums...."

They say.
Taking turns.
Laughing in the yellow yellow
pollen.

These authors, too, are like children. In the words of Victor Villaseñor, dancing flowers still light on their hands; they're not "just butterflies."[9] These writers help us to give shape and meaning to the chaos of our human experience.

Rudolfo Anaya tells us how suffering transforms a person, and "a new person must be born. That is inherent in life, a series of transformations, a constant coming into a new consciousness"[9]. The writer can, therefore, be a shaman restoring us to faith.

Villanueva address the final transformation in a powerful way. In her poetry, sometimes there is a sadness, an aloneness. Forever at the headlands of our humanity, Villanueva often has an elegiac tone, the setting the threshold of the continent, looking to the sea: "the Pacific Ocean that I love like my own tidal blood" (*Autobiography* 301).

I stand on the wet edge
of the tide,
of the sea,
. . . .
the sweet hiss of tide
. . . . (125-26)

She calls upon the timeless image of water as the symbol of life and death, in "The Real Sacred Game," one of the four poems in the closing frame of *Desire*. In it, she chastises her husband, whom she doesn't love anymore, who left her youngest son behind, this man

. . . who doesn't under
stand the beauty of
a son who surfs by

moonlight in the frigid
winter sea. . . .

. . . .

My son surfing under the
Full Moon. I see his
soul, his Death, in
fearless harmony . . . .

In her letter of 13 August, she reflects further on the nature of our ultimate transformation in recalling a beautiful dream she had of Whitey, about three months after he "left his body… . I went to 'the place of the dead,' a transitional place—I've dreamt this place before—a place where the spirit/soul rests while out of the body and waits for further instructions, and to choose what existence is next." Later in the letter she speaks of Mamacita teaching her about dreams; "and," she adds, "I know that's why I chose to be born into my family, to be with Jesús, Mamacita, my teacher and beloved grandmother."[10]

Speaking of her own final transformation she ends her poem "Empty Circle" with that prayer-like state into which Denise Levetrov says the poet can get caught up when writing a poem (O'Connell 25):

> . . . .
> I will die in the afternoon, sunset,
> into the freshness of a storm, the
> night an onyx ring—I will be the
> emptiness in the circle and death
>
> will wear me like an ornament—I will
> be a shadow on death's finger, a slender
> nothingness. All I ask for in this
> life is the sun.
>
> That's all I want. (32)

In conclusion, innocence and wonder—paradise—has been given, has been lost, and must be re-membered. The poet becomes a paradigm of how we must somehow survive this death of life through our successive transformations at liminal abysses in our lives—as individuals and as a world community in convergence. Villanueva has not lost faith in human reason. She scrutinizes reality and the human experience for meaning. She revives, nourishes, and recreates our sense of wonder. She sees us embedded in nature, rather than as an accident of nature. She tells us that as adults, we must continue to wonder, to ask the great questions about ourselves: who we are, what is our origin and destiny, why there is evil.

Dreams, "the wishes, [the desires] of the heart" do matter. Her concern with transcendence is not a matter for a patronizing, dismissive shrug of the shoulder.[11] Transcendence matters because that concern reveals that we matter. On the threshold of the millennium, Alma Luz Villanueva—the bruja, the witch—becomes Mamacita to our world.

Endnotes

[1] Alejandro Morales writes an article on the archetypal, timeless, dimensionality of Villanueva's writing; Santiago Daydi-Tolson dismisses such a possibility. "Critics," he comments in his *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (DLB) article on Villanueva, "have insisted on the mythical quality of this poetry. The concrete images and topics ... [Villanueva] selects to refer to concepts all create an immediate and physical image that counteracts any tendency to interpret her views on abstract terms" (315).

But where else do abstractions come from except, by definition, from the concrete whence they are drawn forth, "abs-trahere-d"? However, Daydi-Tolson's comment serves to call attention to how her poetry is nature-bound, earthy, sometimes strongly sexual, charged with Dionysian abandon.

She has the habit of listing images of nature, of people, of women hurt, "a primitive desire that," Richard Wilbur tells us, is radical to poetry—the desire to lay claim to as much of the world as possible through uttering the names of thing, ... a longing to possess the whole world, and to praise it, or at least to feel it" (470-71).

[2] The Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, in *The Origin of Philosophy*, writes that poets awaken in us that "strange phenomenon whereby the pleasure aroused by poetry and admiration for the poet stem, paradoxically, from our notion of being plagiarized. Everything he tells us we have previously 'felt,' except that we did not know how to express it. The poet," he says, "is the shrewd go-between with Man and himself" (63-64). We feel that the poet was listening in on our inner-speak—which Ortega y Gasset calls *endophasia*. We now know that we are not the only ones who have been in that moral space and time. S/he is gifted with the ability to

tell, truly, exquisitely, who we are—what matters to us.

[3]Critic Marta Ester Sánchez aptly notes that Villanueva as poet focuses less on dimensions of ethnicity. In her poetry, Sánchez suggests that Villanueva responds "primarily as a woman to the dominant masculine society in the United States. The relationship between her identities as woman and as poet is one of harmony and integration" (8). Kathryn Trueblood suggests that it was "the pace, expanse, and multiplicity of view afforded by the novel form," that gave Villanueva the space that she needed "to examine issues of Chicana identity" (608).

[4]"...Mamacita taught me 'dreaming' the way most native cultures have for centuries, whereas Western culture(s) wipe it out in the young child, and ALL children are born with their soul, spirit, essence in tune with the Universe, their receptors wide open. She guided me to open them further." (Letter to author, 13 August 1998.)

[5]In many of my presentations, I say that you cannot make a one-sided tortilla. I think ultimately of the human mystery of how the nether/verso side of our giving ourselves to the other in love is inextricably rooted in human freedom. A creature who can love is essentially compromised by the inherent possibility of turning inward in selfishness, in a Sartrean hell with an open door, but with "No Exit." C. S. Lewis's, contemplating the conundrum, states it most poignantly in his personal essay *A Grief Observed*:

> Sometimes, Lord, one is tempted to say that if you wanted us to behave like the lilies of the field, you might have given us an organization more like theirs. But that, I suppose, is just your grand experiment. Or no, not an experiment, for you have no need to find things out. Rather your grand enterprise. To make an organism which is also a spirit; to make that terrible oxymoron, a "spiritual animal." To take a poor primate, a beast with nerve/endings all over it, a creature with a stomach that wants to be filled, a breeding animal that wants its mate, and say "Now get on

> with it. Become a god. (84-85).

[6]Butterflies, the Toltec symbol of life, appear frequently in Villanueva's poetry.

[7]I believe that the loss of innocence is the discovery of evil in the world and in oneself. It is also the loss of the child's astonishing sense of questioning wonder.

[8]Philosopher, theologian, and scientist, de Chardin sees physical evolution as a continuum developing into a moral evolution.

> … by hominization the universe has attained a higher level on which its physico-moral powers gradually take the form of a fundamental affinity, binding the individuals to one another and to what we have called the 'Omega point'. In us and around us, we have been able to conclude, the world's units are continually and increasingly personalizing, by approaching a goal of unification, itself personal; in such a way that the world's essential energy definitely radiates from this goal and finally flows back towards it; having confusedly set the cosmic mass in motion, it emerges from it to form the noosphere. What name should we give to an influence of this sort? Only one is possible: love (145).

See also de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man*.

[9]Villaseñor speaks of his realism as blinding him to the truth of the wonderful in his parent's stories:

> Why, it was all true! I'd just been too much in my own head for so long that I couldn't see it. It was like the child who called to her mother, saying, "Mamá! Mamá! Please, come quick and see! A dancing flower has landed on my hand! And it loves me! Come and look! It can fly! It's an angel!"

> And the mother, who'd been doing taxes all day long … said, "That's just a butterfly!"
>
> "Oh," said the child, repeating what she had heard her mother say, "just a butterfly!" And then, that child knocked the insect off herself and never again could see butterflies with magic and wonder again.
>
> And this is what happened to me once I'd left my mother's side and started school. The wonder, the magic, was ripped away from me" (35).

Children question, sometimes to the point of irritation. "Children," William J. O'Malley, S.J. writes in *America* magazine, "like all genuine philosophers, are born mentally and sensorily ravenous." The stifling begins about second grade, he adds (14).

[10] In something of a Platonic vein, she also speaks of the body as an instrument of the essence (spirit/soul): "I feel the body is only a (wonderful, miraculous) vehicle for our essence here on Earth." In her reflections on the nature of our transformation after death she lies somewhere between two other poets of the central California coast: Robinson Jeffers and William Everson (Brother Antoninus). Each in his own way, celebrated the divine in our oneness with nature.

Jeffers scholar Robert J. Brophy writes of him: A poet, prophet, seer of the Big Sur Coast who loved God above all things, and found Him/Her/It in the beauty of the ocean, mountain, rock, tree, hawk and storm and stars (Overleaf ms. dedication to González-T. of copy of *The Robinson Jeffers Newsletter: A Jubilee Gathering 1962-1988*).

[11] At an American Literature Association Conference in San Diego, where I read a paper on an earlier collection of Alma Luz Villanueva's poetry Life Span, I concluded by speaking of the transcendent dimensions of her work. In the comment period that followed, a respected critic asked me, with a condescending shrug of his shoulders, "César, transcendence …?" In my proposal to present this paper to you, I wrote: "I would like to respond to that shrug!"

See "An Appreciation of Alma Luz Villanueva's Life Span." Paper presented 1 June 1990, Bahia Hotel: panel, "Crossing Boundaries: Male Readings of Chicana Feminist Texts." Moderator: Roberto Cantú; Cal-State U.L.A.

Works Cited

Anaya, Rudolfo. "Shaman of Words." Unpublished essay, 1998.

Brophy, Robert J., ed. *The Robinson Jeffers Newsletter; a Jubilee Gathering 1962-1968*. Los Angeles: Occidental College, 1988.

Bauermeister, Erica, Jesse Larsen, and Holly Smith, eds. *Five Hundred Great Books by Women: A Reader's Guide*. New York: Penguin, 1994.

Chambers, Veronica. "Women Trying to Live as Best They Can." Rev. *of Naked Ladies*, by Alma Luz Villanueva. *Los Angeles Times* 3 March, 1994: E2.

Chardin, Teilhard de. *Human Energy*. Trans. J. M. Cohen. New York: HBJ, 1969.

———. *The Phenomenon of Man*. Trans. Bernard Wall. New York: Harper, 1959.

Daydí-Tolson, Santiago. "Alma Luz Villanueva (4 October 1944-)." *Chicano Writers: Second Series. Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Ed. Francisco A. Lomelí and Carl R. Shirley. Vol. 121. Detroit: Gale, 1992. 313-17.

González-T., César A. "An Appreciation of Alma Luz Villanueva's *Life Span." Confluencia* 6.2 (1991): 169-75.

———. "An Interview with Rudolfo A. Anaya." *Rudolfo A. Anaya: Focus on Criticism*. Ed. César A. González-T. La Jolla: Lalo, 1990. 459-70.

Lewis, C. S. *A Grief Observed*. New York: Bantam, 1961.

Mendóza, Marisa. She Heals Me. Unpublished Essay, San Diego Mesa College, 1998.

Morales, Alejandro. "Terra Mater and the Emergence of Myth in *Poems* by Alma Villanueva." *The Bilingual Review* 7.2 (1980): 123-42.

O'Connell, Nicholas. "A Poet's Valediction." Interview with Denise Levetrov. *Poets & Writers* 26.3 (1998): 20-25.

O'Malley, William J. "Curiosity." *America* 3 Oct. 1998: 14-19.

Ortega y Gasset, José. *The Origin of Philosophy*. Trans. Toby Talbot. New York: Norton, 1967.

Sánchez, Marta Ester, *Contemporary Chicana Poetry: A Critical Approach to an Emerging Literature*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1985.

Three Chicana Writers: Alma Luz Villanueva, Lucha Corpi, Anna Castilllo. Videotape. San Diego Mesa College, Learning Resource Center, 14 March 1991.

Transcendence. *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1991.

Trueblood, Kathryn. Foreword to excerpt from *The Ultraviolet Sky*. By Alma Luz Villanueva. *The Before Columbus Foundation Fiction Anthology: Selections from the American Book Awards 1980-1990*. Ed. Ishmael Reed et al. New York: Norton, 1992. 607-09.

Villanueva, Alma Luz. "Alma Luz Villanueva 1944- ." *Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series*. Vol. 24. Detroit: Gale, 1996. 299-324.

———. "Blood Ties: Standing at Different Points in the Creative Cycle." *Ms.* Nov./Dec. 1994: 22-26.

———. *Desire*. Tempe: Bilingual, 1998.

———. Letter to author. 13 August 1998.

———. Letter/untitled typescript to author. 10 August 1996.

———. *Life Span*. Austin: Place of Herons, 1985.

———. *Naked Ladies*. Tempe: Bilingual, 1994.

———. "Prose Statement on Poetry." Typescript, n.d.

———. *The Ultraviolet Sky*. Tempe: Bilingual, 1988.

Villaseñor, Victor. *Walking Stars: Stories of Magic and Power*. New York: Delta-Bantam, 1994.

Wilbur, Richard. "Poetry and Happiness." *Claims for Poetry*. Ed. Donald Hall. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1982. 469-89.

Writing Shalako: The Anthropologist as Tourist, from Cushing to the Tedlocks

Ron Denson

In November of 1879, a few weeks after he had entered Zuni pueblo, a young man of twenty-two found himself in a brightly lit room, receiving lashes from a "priest" wielding a yucca wand. His offense?: having gotten flustered when trying to remember the proper greeting to the Zuni elders, and letting slip a few words in Spanish. But, Frank Hamilton Cushing went on to write, his immediate goal had been achieved: he had penetrated the sacred space of the altar room; and, he concluded, "This little glimpse revealed to me a mysterious life by which I had little dreamed I was surrounded, and I looked forward with curious anxiety to the coming ceremonials"—the first time, he thought, a white man had ever witnessed Shalako (*Zuni* 82-83).

Skip forward nearly a century to another scene in Zuni pueblo, to a house newly renovated to receive the god impersonators of Shalako. Barbara and Dennis Tedlock, adoptive members of a Zuni family, have just been made up by their host, her face powdered with corn meal, his head wrapped in a red silk scarf. They had already, like Cushing before them, gotten their ears pierced for the ceremony. At that moment of satisfaction at getting the trappings right, a fear crosses Barbara's mind: what if people they know, what if other Zuni, should see them in such getup? What would they think? For, she acknowledges, "playing Indian is a dangerous business" (238-239).

It is these two incidents which will frame my discussion here, as they suggest many of the themes that have governed anthropological discourse about the meaning of one of the most widely known religious rituals of North America—Shalako, the exquisitely complex, multi-layered ceremony during which masked god impersonators in fantastic bird costumes ten feet tall arrive from the Sacred Lake to the west of the pueblo, re-enacting the Zuni origin and migration myths, and then spend the night dancing in homes specially chosen for the occasion. Both contemporaries of and successors to Cushing like Matilda Coxe Stevenson, Ruth Bunzel, and Elsie

Clews Parsons as well as popular mediators between Indian and white cultures like John Collier, Frank Waters, and Erna Fergusson, agree that Shalako exerts a fascination surpassing even that of the notorious Hopi snake dance. And like its Hopi counterpart, Shalako has been the occasion for expressing a range of fears and hopes regarding the prospects for communication and understanding between different cultures, the apparent fate of the people who perform it, and the hunger—as well as hubris—of the surrounding white culture.

This discourse has played a key role in inventing the Southwest and in imagining the Indians of this region. Propelled at the outset by a belief that the Zuni way of life could not—and perhaps should not—withstand the inexorable advance of white culture, the discourse in its early years traded heavily on the trope of the "vanishing American"; the "pure" Indian would fade away as agents of Anglo civilization steadily encroached on Zuni culture. The anthropologists, in this scheme, commissioned by the newly formed Bureau of American Ethnology, bore the burden of recording the details of a culture that derived its interest from being completely "other," and whose assimilation into the national culture would destroy the basis of that interest. The hands of the clock, as always, were tilted against the "other," and the pueblos had to be studied while there was still enough cultural integrity to be worth studying.

But unlike the Hopi snake dance, Shalako has continued to serve as a metonymic representation of Zuni culture, and as such, has offered in addition to a glimpse of the Zuni ethnographic present a hope for the future, not only of Zuni and the Middle Place that it occupies in its mythic sense of itself but of the rest of the world as well. That hope was tied to a model of reciprocity which forms the basis for social interaction in non-capitalist, stateless societies but which tends to disappear, as Mary Louise Pratt has reminded us, under capitalism (84). It was a hope not readily seen at first by anthropologists, yet it could be glimpsed in the presence of what Cushing saw that first autumn in Zuni: "hundreds of Navajos, Moquis, and Indians from the Rio Grande pueblos" (*Zuni* 83)—all guests at Shalako. The Zuni hospitality to their guests was legion—everyone except for "Mexicans" was welcome, to share in the brilliance of the dance, the bounty of the feast, the beauty of the silver handiwork to be traded. There were, to be sure, boundaries drawn regarding what visitors would or would not be able to witness, the crossing of which boundaries could result in real tension. Yet apart from the promise not to sketch or report on the ceremony—a promise frequently broken—what would the new Anglo guests be giving the Zuni in return?

This question of reciprocity, of mutual exchange, underlay Cushing's struggling efforts at cross-cultural communication. As a highly self-conscious participant observer, he vexed his hosts with the unwavering determination to penetrate every secret of their collective life, a hallmark of the invasive ethnology of the time. And with his successful entry into the restricted room on the eve of his first Shalako, Cushing began in earnest his mission to capture Zuni culture for an American audience—his "Adventures in Zuni" soon to be serialized in *Century Magazine*.

Cushing had been discouraged both by the hard conditions of his stay at Zuni and by the secretiveness of his hosts regarding their ceremonial and ritual life. He was thus cheered unexpectedly by Palowatiuh, his host and the Zuni governor, with the following invitation: "Little brother, make your heart glad," for "a great festival is now everyone's thought. Eighteen days more, and from the west will come Sha'lako; it welcomes the return of the Ka-ka and speeds the departure of the sun. Make your heart glad, for you shall see it too" (*Zuni* 75-76)—a first step in Palowatiuh's plan to "make a Zuni" of him and an indication of the generous spirit in which Shalako was to be enjoyed.

Cushing remains an enigmatic figure in the history of Southwest ethnography, his penchant for "playing Indian" or "going native" providing a model of what Curtis Hinsley has called "ethnographic charisma" to counter the more detached and professionally accepted modes of "scientific routine" practiced by Mrs. Stevenson and Cushing's own successor J. W. Fewkes. And Cushing's ambivalence about his own purposes and accomplishments in his life among the Zunis has kept him a fascinating figure in the history of cross-cultural representation ever since. For on the one hand he situates himself firmly in the emerging tradition of salvage ethnology, the effort to probe and penetrate the secrets, to literally capture the customs and color of native life before inevitable extinction or assimilation ensued. As he wrote in 1884: "I have to have knowledge of savage life, and it matters less to me where I find it, than it does in what measure I find it. Zuni, therefore, while I confess it to be a patch of thorns in the side of a civilized being, is attractive to me because of the satisfaction it gives to my craving after knowledge of savage life and lore" (qtd. in Hinsley, "Ethnographic Charisma" 56).

Yet he senses that such extinction or assimilation will represent a loss not only to the scientific enterprise of universal human knowledge but to the human spirit itself. If indeed, as he comes to acknowledge, "Of all the people on this continent, not excluding ourselves, the most profoundly religious. . .are the American Indians" (qtd. in Hinsley, "Ethnographic Charisma" 57), then what would they have to gain by "being made usefuler [sic] and better than it has been supposed possible" (qtd. in Hinsley, "Ethnographic Charisma" 55)? And what would the Zuni themselves want from contact with white culture—especially if they didn't share its judgment that they occupied a lower rung on the evolutionary ladder?

We get a sense of what the Zunis were making of Cushing's interactions with them from notes Cushing made during the second trip of their leaders to the East in 1886. "Strange people, strange people, these Americans!" they exclaim. "Though we Indians live in a poor and dried-up country, though we may love them not, and treat them despitefully, yet they gather around us and come into our country continually, and even strive to get our land from us. Is it possible for anyone to say what they want?" It seemed not, for "they wander incessantly, wander through all difficulties and dangers, to seek new places and better things. Why is it they are so unceasingly unsatisfied?" (*Zuni* 414-15).

Why indeed? That unceasing dissatisfaction with one's own circumstances is what Levi-Strauss saw to be the driving force behind the anthropologist's sense of mission. Dissatisfaction with one's own culture would of course lead to the excessive valuation of a foreign one. And that dissatisfaction with one's own culture, its perceived lack of authenticity, is behind what Dean MacCannell has identified as a key to understanding what he calls "modern-man-in-general." The central figure in an ethnology of modernity is, for MacCannell, the tourist—the figure that allows him to explain that peculiarly modern disease, the "malady of the quotidian." Tourism becomes the practice through which we attempt to cancel out our alienation, our lack of authenticity, by locating authenticity elsewhere, especially within those cultures that have resisted most successfully the encroachment of modernity's materialistic rationalism. He emphasizes that "no other major social structural distinction. . . has received such massive reinforcement as the ideological separation of the modern from the non-modern world." In our march on the road to Progress, we do not wish to extinguish the "primitive"; rather, we wish to preserve it artificially, even to recreate it, as a reservoir of transformation to which we can recur when inevitably emptied by our modern routine (*The Tourist* 5-16).

According to MacCannell's intriguing model, the practices of anthropology and tourism can be seen to blend into one another, producing in their consumers a longing for the out-of-the-ordinary, the strange, the authentic exotic other. There is something of this impulse behind Cushing's "craving after knowledge of savage life and lore," an impulse that had him—for a few years, anyway—suspended between two cultures. Yet in a talk late in his career to the Indian Commissioners titled "The Need of Studying the Indian in Order to Teach Him," Cushing crystallized where his loyalty lay: we must, he says, "learn how he came to be what he is, and thus learn how to make him other than he is" (*Zuni* 428). "Playing Indian" was to have an instrumental purpose after all.

His bitter rival, Matilda Coxe Stevenson, dismissed Cushing's adoption of Zuni ways as mere posturing, as affectation directed more to his audience back East than to the earnest wishes of his adoptive pueblo. He only got himself up in Zuni garb, she claimed, when visitors showed up. Yet her own attitude toward the Zuni, like Cushing's, reveals the ironic stance of wanting to preserve the integrity of their culture while also "civilizing" them (Parezo 46-48). Her authoritative study, *The Zuni Indians*, methodically describes Shalako from the perspective of both an appreciator of the ritual's unchanging aesthetic and a critic of the social declension brought on by opening up the ceremony to white spectators. Noting that "nothing seems to be of such general interest to the Indians, not even the snake ceremonial of the Hopi, as the Sha'lako festival of the Zunis" (240), she goes on to comment frequently on the scenes "most pleasing" (262) to the spectator, on the attractiveness and picturesqueness of the gods and their costumes (275), on the dancing impersonators who give "real delight" (266)—phrases that will echo in accounts of Shalako for the next century.

Yet as a salvage ethnologist she is disturbed by the effect that the consumption of alcohol has on the integrity of the ceremony. "Drinking is indulged in until the scene becomes disgusting in the extreme," she frowns (253); "It would be difficult to find a more revolting picture than the one presented during the day and night. The scene of debauchery in the morning is shocking, but as the day wanes, it becomes disgusting in the extreme" (256)—though she does spare her reader the more graphic details. "Liquor," she finds, "is the only thing that prevents these Indians from performing their religious duties" (262)—duties which she took to be crucial to their survival.

From a professional perspective, her purpose in offering her study can be set against Cushing's self-fed "craving" for knowledge: "my aim in the Zuni work was to probe to the very core of their philosophy, their religion, and sociology and to make such a book as would be of positive value to the student of ethnology" (qtd. in Hinsley, *The Smithsonian* 222). And to what uses would such knowledge be put? She succinctly described the essential difference, as she saw it, between the culture of the white and that of the Indian: "We live in a world of reality, he in a world of mysticism and symbolism" (qtd. in Parezo 48)—a fundamental misapprehension that has plagued efforts at cross-cultural understanding ever since.

The succeeding generation of anthropologists continued the meticulous recording of the details of Shalako festivities. Elsie Clews Parsons picked up on that theme of inexorable change, conjecturing that "fifty percent of Zuni culture may be borrowed from White culture" (qtd. in Hieb 67), a conjecture firmly rejected by her informant. Parsons probes the secrets behind the artful movement of the Shalako god impersonators, seeing the hand of European technological expertise in the working of the masks themselves. The long snouts of the masks, she finds, "open and close by a string and make a great clatter; a unique arrangement which I am guessing is European"; and the mask itself "is on a pole carried by the impersonator and supported in his belt, also a European device" (750 n.). Thus the spectacle, while emblematic of Indian culture, depended on white ingenuity for its most stunning appearance.

A later contemporary of Parsons, Ruth Bunzel, noted that "the culmination of the Ca'lako ceremony is fully described—that is, as fully as any one person can describe any elaborate Pueblo ceremony" (945) by Stevenson and by Parsons—a hint, perhaps, of

Bunzel's sense of the limits of individual ethnographic authority. In her "less personal, more technical" studies (Wilson 22), she comments in a footnote on a house ceremony in which the very dangerous Shalako mask was handled by the priests. "She was taken in to see the Ca'lako," she writes of herself in the accepted third person. And, she goes on, "She was injudicious enough to offer a pinch of corn meal on the altar"—a gaffe that earns a reprimand from the *katchina* chief. Her informant supplies the explanation: "One doesn't give corn meal away for nothing. One always asks for something in one's thoughts, and the people are afraid you will take all their good luck with you when you go, because of your corn meal" (971 n. 54).

Here, writ small, is an instance of the violation of reciprocity, so crucial to the ritual practices of the pueblos. The questioning of Anglo motives had begun with Cushing's "Adventures"—he had indeed, contrary to Zuni wishes, published drawings of Shalako in *Century Magazine*, and Stevenson herself had violated the prohibition against following the Shalako out to the plain on their exit from the pueblo—and by Bunzel's time, the presence of anthropologists had become even more odious. While Ruth Benedict, in *Patterns of Culture*, and Aldous Huxley, in *Brave New World*, were using the Zuni as foils to the disintegration and alienation of modern Western life as seen between the wars, anthropologists were continually wearing out their welcome at the real Zuni. When Cushing's brother-in-law, Frank W. Hodge, for example, attempted to film the Shalako dances in 1923, he exacerbated a factional dispute between "traditionals" and "progressives," got his cameras smashed, and earned a quick eviction from the site (Pandey 331-332). After this incident, anthropologists had an even more difficult time gaining access to the pueblo. "Indians have been cursed above all other people in history. Indians have anthropologists" (Deloria 83). Vine Deloria, Jr., dug in that barb thirty years ago, and anthropologists have been trying to finesse its extrication ever since. The old joke that every Zuni family consists of a mother, father, two kids, and an anthropologist is, of course, but a joke, yet one which speaks to the increasing resistance of the Zuni to ever-more-disruptive outside influence (Pandey 321), to their desire to define for themselves the terms of contact with the outside world.

Yet even the most sympathetic of observers can find that urge disturbing. Frank Waters, for example, whose life explored the possibilities of "becoming indigenous" (Bridger 183), punctuates his description of Shalako—in which he senses "the timeless flow of the divine through all, a quickening perception of the spiritual essence in all things" (Waters 291)—with the following anecdote. "It is a silent, relaxed, easy-going crowd. There is only one disturbance on the steps, a dull angry murmur as a fool Zuni makes a fool white man take off his hat. It is the only discord of the night, and it makes one sicker than the stench." He attempts to rationalize his response: "There is something honest and reassuring about a Zuni scratching for lice or picking his nose, utterly at ease in the presence of his gods. But this holy and hypocritical 'hats off, this is our religion, you've got to be respectful' attitude smacks too much of the white" (294)—from Waters, a biting criticism indeed. Yet one might chide him for a little nit-picking himself. Such incidents are common in descriptions of Shalako, as whites, through ignorance or ill manners, often fail to appreciate the sacredness of consecrated space. So what could be the source of Waters' outrage?

As the representation of Shalako fell increasingly to the popularizers, one can detect a proprietary interest at least as strong as that of the anthropologists who paved the way for them, and that interest speaks to their concerns about not just maintaining the integrity of Zuni culture, but of redeeming the whole of the fallen western world. An ally of Waters in this campaign is John Collier, who "witnessed the Shalako only once," yet, he writes, "it remains in memory the crown of all experience I have had" of any "great ritual drama" (157). And the memory of Shalako informs his hopes for the world; the home of that great drama, Zuni, "not merely foreshadows the democratic, pluralistic and holistic world order to come. It possesses and lives by the organizational principles which must be those of the democratic, pluralistic and holistic world order which must take form in the years to come" (155). This would seem to qualify as a species of salvage ethnology, but its object is quite other than that envisioned by Cushing and Mrs. Stevenson.

Other Southwest afficionados, like Erna Fergusson, disavow any illusion about the possibilities of cross-cultural communication. "Everything Indian," she claims in her book *Dancing Gods*, must always be "inexplicable. . . to the white man" (98). And in her description of one of the most dramatic moments of the ceremony, she reinforces that sense of futility: "In a breathless moment of the swift winter dusk the Shalako appear. They come into sight round the shoulder of a hill, looming, as it were, on the far side of that deep impassable gulf which forever separates the mind of the Indian from the mind of the white" (99). For her the "Indian world. . . is a separate world. The white man sees it, touches it, some even have the temerity to try to break into it, to change it. But they cannot. For this is a world apart, a brown world of brown people. They come out of their world to speak to us, for they understand our language; but when they withdraw into their world, we cannot follow" (276).

Edmund Wilson, inspired by Fergusson's account of Shalako, had to see it for himself. "The journalist like myself," he concludes his wonderful essay, "who has reported many hateful and destructive events, wants to get a good look at the Shalako birds, bringers of happy abundance, before they shall cease to have come" (68). Urged on by his sense of the fragility of the ethnographic present, he gets perhaps more than he bargained for. The key passage is worth quoting at some length.

> Carried along by the rhythm yourself, alternately let down and lulled, then awakened and stimulated, in a sequence that never faltered, you were held by a kind of spell. The great blue-and-white creature irresistibly took on for you, too, an extrahuman personality, became a thing you could not help watching, a principle of bounding and soaring life that you could not help venerating...I found that it was only with effort that I...could withstand its hypnotic effect. I had finally to take myself in hand in order to turn my attention and to direct myself out of the house. For something in me began to fight the Shalako, to reject and repulse its influence just at the moment when it was most compelling. One did not want to rejoin the Zunis in their primitive nature cult....(41)

Yet he finds that "the effect of it lingered and haunted [him] even after [he] was back in [his] guest-house" (42)—perhaps sensing the very real danger in being seduced into bridging the gulf that

Fergusson found impassable.

Twenty years later the Tedlocks seemed to have succeeded in bridging that gulf, Dennis' study of Zuni narrative poetry having opened up rich new interpretive possibilities. But the dramatic interest in Barbara Tedlock's chapter on Shalako from her book *The Beautiful and the Dangerous* derives not from the seductiveness of the dancers, as in Wilson, but from yet another breach in propriety that seems to epitomize the meaning of this attempt to cross cultural boundaries. A rancher comes in—a "bad-ass rodeo-type"—and makes lewd comments to her host about Tedlock dressed up as a Zuni. In spite of her effort to brush off the rudeness, she becomes "humiliated and angry." "Ashamed to look, be, white like this shit-kicker—having so much trouble controlling myself—I bolted from the dining room." The wages of playing Indian—and getting called on the imposture—are made obvious. The expectation is that, as Tedlock puts it, "At this special time, if everyone remains serene, kind, and cheerful, then the host family, village, nation, and even the entire world can know the end of anger and the beginning of profound peace" (251-252). Yet her anecdote shows how easily threatened is that serenity and cheerfulness, how elusive that peace.

It is this ecumenical hope that continued to animate the holding of Shalako in succeeding years. Virgil Wyaco, a Zuni veteran of World War II whose autobiography was published in 1998, celebrates Shalako as the occasion on which he "feel[s] most a Zuni," and he "love[s] everyting about it" (96). The dance is given to ensure Zuni survival; for "if the Zuni do not survive, what will happen to the world outside of Zuni?" (97). A century-old anthropological judgment still weighs heavily, as he counters Stevenson's picture of the celebration as a drunken revel. For Wyaco, "The gods do exist and are present in the dance" (97), and there is no drinking. "The old men," he explains, "tell us that the Shalako is a serious ceremonial for the whole world, not just for the Zuni. We live at the center of the earth, and what we do affects the whole world, not just the Zuni" (99).

After reading in Wyaco's autobiography about the apparent lifting of the prohibition on Hispanics' attending Shalako, I was recently informed that the dance has been closed to outsiders as of 1996—the pueblo's response to the arrival of busloads of tourists brought in by a local tour operator. The news was sobering, as the exclusion would seem to work against the best hope not only of Zuni pueblo but of the outside world as well. But it does bring home the difficulty of managing any kind of cross-cultural communication in an age in which the consumption of the tourist spectacle has become one of the world's major industries. From the time of Palowatiuh on, the Zuni have insisted on real reciprocity between themselves and the outside world, and if the legions of anthropologists have left that obligation in important ways unfulfilled, how could mere tourists possibly do better?

Curtis Hinsley has noted the severe costs exacted upon the Zuni for their status as exotic internal other to a dominant Anglo national culture: "The Zunis became the special property of artists and poets," he writes, "and their pueblo served as the playground for mimetic anthropologists from Cushing to Dennis Tedlock" ("Zunis and Brahmins" 203). And now tourists, mimetic creatures themselves, have assumed the mantle of the anthropologists in their quest for authenticity in the colorful rituals of the exotic other, but what do they give back in return? We do get hints from the anthropologist Edmund Ladd's comment about his own pueblo—"we've gone from ritual to retail" (qtd. in 131)—and Virgil Wyaco does remark that in Zuni it's no longer an anthropologist but rather a silversmith that resides in "nearly every family" (103).

Dean MacCannell asserts that "the central ethical question of postmodernity concerns the appropriation of tradition" ("Tradition's Next Step" 174) ; and if he is right, the place of anthropologists and tourists in witnessing Shalako, in the scheme of Zuni life, in the definition of American culture, will of necessity remain an open and most vexed question. Surely more adequate models of reciprocity remain to be achieved.

Works Cited

Bridger, Bobby. "Frank Waters: Becoming Indigenous" in *Frank Waters: Man and Mystic*. Ed. Vine Deloria, Jr. Swallow Press. Athens, OH: 1993.

Bunzel, Ruth. *Zuni Katchinas*. 47Th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1929-1930. Reprint by the Rio Grande Press. Glorieta, NM: 1973.

Collier, John. *On the Gleaming Way*. Sage Books. Denver: 1962.

Deloria, Vine, Jr. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. Avon Books. New York: 1969.

Fergusson, Erna. *Dancing Gods: Indian Ceremonials of New Mexico and Arizona*. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque: 1988 [1931].

Hieb, Louis A., "Elsie Clews Parsons in the Southwest" in *Hidden Scholars: Women Anthropologists and the Native American Southwest*. Ed. Nancy J. Parezo. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque: 1993. 63-75.

Hinsley, Curtis. "Ethnographic Charisma and Scientific Routine: Cushing and Fewkes in the American Southwest, 1979-1893" in *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Ed. Stocking, George W., Jr. University of Wisconsin Press. Madison: 1983. 53-69.

________. *The Smithsonian and the American Indian: Making a Moral Anthroplogy in Victorian America*. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington: 1981.

________. "Zunis and Brahmins: Cultural Ambivalence in the Gilded Age" in Howard, Katleen L. and Diana F. Pardue. *Inventing the Southwest: The Fred Harvey Company and Native American Art*. Northland Publishing. Flagstaff, AZ: 1996.

MacCannell, Dean. *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. Schocken Books. New York: 1976.

________. "Tradition's Next Step" in *Discovered Country: Tourism and Survival in the American West*. Ed. Scott Norris. Stone Ladder Press. Albuquerque: 1994. 161-179.

Pandey, Triloki Nath. "Anthropologists at Zuni." *Proceedings of* *the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 116, No. 4. Aug. 1972. 321-337.

Parezo, Nancy J. "Matilda Coxe Stevenson: Pioneer Ethnologist" in *Hidden Scholars: Women Anthropologists and the Native American Southwest*. Ed. Nancy J. Parezo. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque: 1993. 38-63.

Parsons, Elsie Clews. *Pueblo Indian Religion*, Vol II, Part 1. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago: 1939.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. Routledge. New York: 1992.

Stevenson, Matilda Coxe. *The Zuni Indians: Their Mythology, Esoteric Societies, and Ceremonies*. 23rd Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Washington: 1904.

Tedlock, Barbara. *The Beautiful and the Dangerous: Encounters with the Zuni Indians*. Viking Penguin. New York: 1992.

Waters, Frank. *Masked Gods: Navaho and Pueblo Ceremonialism*. Ballantine Books. New York: 1970 [1950].

Wilson, Edmund. "Zuni" in *Red, Black, Blond, and Olive*. Oxford University Press. New York: 1956.

Wyaco, Virgil. *A Zuni Life: A Pueblo Indian in Two Worlds*. Transcribed and edited by J. A. Jones. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque: 1998.

Zuni: Selected Writings of Frank Hamilton Cushing. Ed. Jesse Green. University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln, NE: 1981.

Seriously Funny Native American Authors

Jacquelyn Kilpatrick

> One last word, please, could we keep our voices
> down and our hands out of the conversation . . .
> Thank you, please, shall we begin again now?
>
> Bearheart, 164.

Native Americans are very funny people. It's true, but it comes as a surprise to most Americans who grew up watching Hollywood Pretend Indians—that humorless, bloodthirsty or pitiful bunch whose main role in film was to vanish for one reason or the other. It is fortunate for those who would like to get to know the American Indian, to say nothing of those who are Native American, that there is a large and growing body of fiction written by Native authors, based in their own cultural experiences and which includes the vitality, pain, laughter, struggle and humor of the very much alive American Indian peoples.

While a few authors such as John Rollin Ridge, Mourning Dove, and D'Arcy McNickle were writing decades before, America first began to take notice of Native American writing in 1969, when N. Scott Momaday received a Pulitzer Prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*. In the last thirty years, the literature written by Native American authors has grown to many hundreds and encompasses virtually all genres, and the body of accompanying literary criticism has grown along with it. It is, in fact, one of the most vital and interesting fields of literature in the world.

In reading the novels written by these authors, and the critics' assessments of them, it is almost impossible not to notice that they have something striking in common; no matter what the style, the tribal affiliation of the author, whether he or she is mixedblood or fullblood writing about rural life, urban life or reservation life, these novels take, with very few exceptions, the structural form of comedy. Having said that, it is important that the idea of "comedy" be explored—we must differentiate between comedy as a form and the comic, which refers to a tone, both of which are intrinsic to most fiction by American Indian authors.

A novel whose form is that of the comedy is not necessarily a "funny" novel. A good example of this is the aforementioned *House Made of Dawn*. The protagonist, Able, is filled with pain and alienation through most of that story, and while flashes of brilliant comic tone do appear, the novel is a very serious exploration of a man's search for his identity. Able is, as Louis Owens has noted, a reflection of

> the postmodern insistence upon the fragmented sense of self . . . in the radically deracinated mixedblood of much Indian fiction . . . . In many cases, Indian protagonists resemble the typically displaced modernist figure who 'finds himself in a situation he recognizes structurally as an inquiry into significance, but he is no longer sure of what he is supposed to be looking for.' Repeatedly in Indian fiction, though, we are shown the possibility of recovering a centered sense of personal identity and significance. (Owens, *Other Destinies* 19)

The "centered sense" of which Owens speaks is almost always a cultural center, a return to the community of relations. There is within the American Indian novel a circularity which comes from the cultures themselves, a sense of the connectedness of things and a cultural centeredness which is foreign to the individualistic, isolated sense of the Euroamerican hero in mainstream literature, past and present. As Maurice Charney has noted, "One of the major points of difference between tragedy and comedy has to do with the ways each is pursuing dramatic fulfillment. If a linear, irreversible course of action is nearly always a hallmark of tragedy, comedy is usually marked by a sense of circularity. . . ." (Charney 175)

In *The Argument of Comedy*, Northrop Frye attempted to define comedy as a system. He examined the work of classicists, anthropologists, psychologists and writers in order to both describe comedy and to delineate the comic. Frances Teague sums up Frye's synthesis of comedy as "a coherent system . . . comedy exists on a continuum with tragedy, satire, and romance. . . . In this theory comedy is a remarkably conservative form, which always reestablishes the cultural center in its closure." Suzanne Langer, in *Feeling* *and Form*, found Frye's focus on the re-establishment of community secondary to the task of asserting the continuance of energetic life. Critic C. L. Barber dismissed both ideas and emphasized "not the order at the end of a comedy, but rather the challenges to that order and the deliberate acting out of disorder that communities permit." (Teague 14) While these three theories of comedy are not quite in sync with each other, they are each applicable to the Native American novel because each stresses the importance of community, a concern of primary importance to Native American writers.

The western heroes, a diverse crew which includes characters ranging from Hamlet to any John Wayne role to the protagonist in the latest Grisham or Clancey novel, are by nature individualistic. He, or a modern she, exists alone, even when surrounded by others. The individual strives for self-sufficiency and deals with others competitively and generally in an aggressive manner. Many protagonists in Native American novels begin this way as well. Cole McCurtain in Owens' *The Sharpest Sight,* the unnamed protagonist in Welch's Winter in the Blood, Tayo in Silko's *Ceremony*, Set in Momaday's *The Ancient Child*, and a host of others begin their journeys as isolated individuals trapped between worlds and outside of their communities. That they return to those communities, to their cultural centers, is a life-affirming, healing act. That they are welcomed back into those communities is possible because the communities themselves, or at least a representative of the community, not only allow the return but in each case actively work to bring the protagonist back to the center.

It is the circular journey back to the cultural center existing at the heart of so many novels by Native American authors that places them in the classical definition of comedic structure, whether the novel itself is comic in tone or not. However, virtually all of these novels do include some "comic" elements, even the most serious of the lot. For instance, Silko's *Ceremony* is definitely not a lighthearted novel, but threads of comic tone run throughout its fabric. Tayo, the protagonist in *Ceremony*, has an Uncle Josiah who buys Mexican longhorn cattle. He says

> "See, I'm not going to make the mistake other guys made, buying those Hereford, white-face cattle. If it's going to be a drought these next few years, then we

> need some special breed of cattle." He had a stack of books on the floor beside his bed, with his reading glasses sitting on top. Every night, for a few minutes after he got in bed, he'd read about cattle breeding in the books the extension agent had loaned to him. Scientific cattle breeding was very complicated he said, and he used to wait until Rocky and Tayo were doing their homework on the kitchen table, and then he would come in from the back room, with his glasses on, carrying a book.
>
> "Read this," he would tell Rocky, "and see if you think it's saying the same thing I think it says." When Rocky finished it, Josiah pushed the book in front of Tayo and pointed at the passage. Then he'd say, "Well?" And the boys would tell him what they got out of it. "That's what I thought too," Josiah would say, "but it seemed like such a stupid idea I wasn't sure if I was understanding right." (Silko 75)

The tone here is definitely comic, though the message is not. A few paragraphs earlier, Josiah had said, "Cattle are like any living thing. If you separate them from the land for too long, keep them in barns and corrals, they lose something. . . . They are scared because the land is unfamiliar, and they are lost. They don't stop being scared either, even when they look quiet and they quit running. Scared animals die off easily." (74) The cattle work as an extended metaphor for Tayo and the other estranged war veterans in the novel, but they are also very funny. They stand with their faces pointing south (they are from Mexico) and they are Houdini-like in their ability to evade confinement. Chasing them becomes a full time job.

The question is, why does comic tone exist so prevalently in Native American fiction? Why do even the most serious of situations often sparkle with a lacy fringe of humor? The reasons are many, obviously, and differ from novel to novel and author to author. In the example from *Ceremony* above, it might well be there as part of the healing ceremony which is the book itself. Laughter heals, even to the point of "boosting the immune system and increasing natural disease-fighting cells and lowering blood pressure."(McGuire 1) Literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's attitude toward laughter is also pertinent here. He said that laughter

> has a deep and philosophical meaning, it is one of the essential forms of the truth concerning the world as a whole, concerning history and man; it is a peculiar point of view relative to the world; the world is seen anew, no less (and perhaps more) profoundly than when seen from the serious standpoint. Therefore, laughter is just as admissible in great literature, posing universal problems, as seriousness. Certain essential aspects of the world are accessible only to laughter. (Bakhtin, *Rabelais*)

On the subject of "history and man," the American Indian author works in an interesting and difficult realm. Most non-Native readers believe they know the history of the American Indian. This "history" includes elements such as the Thanksgiving Feast (which probably actually originated in the celebration following the massacre of the Pequots at Fort Mystik[1]), the Battle of the Little Big Horn (although Custer has now become a "problematic" hero), and the idea that Indians (an all-inclusive term for the 500 distinct tribes) were pretty much wiped out, with only a handful remaining on reservations few Euroamericans ever see. The "types" of Indians fall roughly into three categories: Noble, as in the tear-dropping image of Iron Horse Cody in the '70s Chevron commercials; Bloodthirsty, as depicted in hundreds of mid-century Hollywood westerns; or the Natural Ecologist, a positive but conflicted image which has recently evolved. The images generally have little to do with Native reality, as Vine DeLoria states in no uncertain terms: "[Euroamericans] are sincere but they are only sincere about what they are interested in, not about Indians about whom they know very little. They get exceedingly angry if you try to tell them the truth and will only reject you and keep searching until they find the Indian of their fantasies." (Deloria xv) But the telling of "truth" is the business of Native American fiction. Whether placed on a reservation, such as much of the fiction of Louise Erdrich or Sherman Alexie, in the largely urban settings found in Ed Two-Rivers' fiction, or in the Mississippi swamps and coastal California of Owens' work, the characters in Native

American fiction live modern lives which are believable to Native Americans themselves. In that way, they are inherently more truthful than any anthropologist's text on the "subject."[2]

This truth is not a passive thing. It is an aggressive, world-changing truth, and it therefore, quite naturally, adopts humor as one of its narrative forms. As Wylie Sypher states it, "a laugh is man's way of showing his fangs. . . . we laugh in self-defense and bare our teeth to recruit sinking spirits . . . . Laughter is a tactic for survival, a mark of 'superior adaptation' among gregarious animals." (Sypher 203-4) He continues:

> Comedy is a momentary and publicly useful resistance to authority and an escape from its pressures; and its mechanism is a free discharge of repressed psychic energy or resentment through laughter. . . . The ambivalence of comedy reappears in its social meanings, for comedy is both hatred and revel, rebellion and defense, attack and escape. It is revolutionary and conservative. Socially, it is both sympathy and persecution. . . . Comedy can be a means of mastering our disillusions when we are caught in a dishonest or stupid society. (242-5)

The Native American author's task is to tell the truth, create a meaningful literature, straighten out some historical misconceptions, recognize misdeeds and errors and achieve liberation—quite an ambitious undertaking. Success requires great talent and the wielding of powerful weapons, one of the most powerful of which is a confident and deeply rooted laugh. Laughter allows the author to examine the flaws in the fabric of the world without acceeding to those flaws. Laughter contextualizes the Native Americans' existence and marks them as members of a group to which the dominant society is the Other—in short, it plots the course toward the cultural center and overpowers evil or error by placing it in the realm of the humorous. As Sypher says, "To be able to laugh at evil and error means that we have surmounted them. . . . Whenever we become aware that this is not the best of possible worlds, we need the help of the comedian to meet the 'insuperable defects of actuality.'" (Sypher 246-7)

In novels by non-Native authors, such as Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, Zane Grey's *The Vanishing American*, or even Michael Blake's *Dances With Wolves*, the Native American is most often a tragic figure on the eve of extinction. Although each of these authors obviously has some "sympathy" for the American Indian, each sees the disappearance of the Native American as an unfortunate part of the way things unavoidably are. The Native world is a tragic world to these writers, and as Sypher notes, "tragedy accepts the flaw in the world as it is, then ventures to find nobility in the 'inexorable march of actual situation.'" Though, as in *Dances With Wolves*, the story may be filled with humor, the stories told of Native Americans by non-Native writers over the past five hundred years have almost universally been tragic in form. There is no return to center because there is no center to which the protagonist can return, "and if the tragic illusion is potent enough we are reconciled to the tears at the heart of things." It makes good sense for Native writers to use the opposite form for their fiction. As Sypher says, "unless he is in his 'diplomatic' mood, the comedian refuses to make these concessions in a permanent resistance movement, or rebellion, within the frontiers of human experience. By temperament the comedian is often a fifth columnist in social life." (Sypher 246-7)

Fifth Columnists are a subversive lot, so Native American authors fit right in. Take Louis Owens for instance. In Owens' *The Sharpest Sight*, the young protagonist from California is visiting his ancient Uncle Luther in the Mississippi swampland of the Yazoo River. Cole has found the book *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians* on his uncle's shelf.

> "You reading that book?"
>
> Cole closed the book self-consciously. "I just got it down," he said. "It looked interesting." "Hmph." Uncle Luther held out a hand and Cole gave him the book. "This is a good book. Tells us all about ourselves." He took his glasses from the shelf and put them on. Then he began to thumb through the book, stopping finally with a satisfied grunt. "This here writer was a man of rare intelligence. For a white man," he said. "Listen to this." He began to read, obviously enjoying the way the words rolled off

> his tongue. "The Choctaw warrior, as I knew him in his native Mississippi forest, was as fine a specimen of manly perfection as I have ever beheld." He looked up with a grin. "He seemed to be as perfect as the human form could be. Tall, beautiful in symmetry of form and face, graceful, active, straight, fleet, with lofty and independent bearing, he seemed worthy of saying, as he of Juan Fernandez fame: 'I am monarch of all I survey.' His black piercing eye seemed to penetrate and read the very thoughts of the heart, while his firm step proclaimed a feeling sense of his manly independence. Nor did their women fall behind in all that pertains to female beauty."
>
> The old man paused and looked at Cole with a wide grin. "Now there's a man that hit the nail on the head." (Owens, *Sharpest Sight* 88)

In less than one page of text, Owens has deconstructed the image of the Noble Savage, commented on the "writing about" Indians, removed the native elder from the Wise Old Chief stereotype, made the "mystic" Indian who "reads the very thought of the heart" sound rather silly, defused the past tense verb by having a live Choctaw reading the passage, and placed all that ridiculousness into a context that is surmountable by allowing us to laugh at it.

The novel also makes for extremely enjoyable reading for non-Native audiences, who willingly suspend their disbelief and invest themselves in alien ideas such as *nalusachito* (soul catcher), the *shilup* and *shilombish* (inside and outside Choctaw spirits), a very wise and very funny Catholic ghost, and a set of sisters who are quite gracious though they may or may not be alive. The novel blurs the distinctions between life and death as well as between Native and non-Native worlds, creates a new world view for a non-Native audience and reaffirms that of a Native reader.

The Sharpest Sight is filled with sharp-fanged humor, but it is a serious novel about cultural issues which evolve around a murder—not a comedy in the general sense of the term. Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*, on the other hand, was written as such a comedy, and it is hilarious from cover to cover. It is, however, much more than "just" funny. It is "seriously" funny, an amazing melding of Native storytelling, mythology both Native and Euroamerican, and it has realistic detail enough to make a reader learn to hop dexterously from world to world and time through time. The story is about Alberta, an educated young Indian woman who lives in the city, Lionel, who has remained on the reservation and works in a video store, and Charles, who has apparently adopted the value system of the dominant culture. Or at least that's what the story of the story is about. That story is interpreted by the reader through the presence of another group comprised of The Lone Ranger, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe, and Hawkeye—no, not the "real" fictional characters, or at least we don't think so. They may be the five extremely (more than extremely) old Indian mental hospital escapees—or maybe not. They are accompanied by Coyote, the trickster of many Native American cultures. Their presence provides enormous humor in the novel, but it also neatly deconstructs the stories from which their namesakes come. This Ishmael is someone Melville could not have anticipated, though he would probably have liked him.

Even the "regular" story in this novel is hilarious. Take for instance the local diner, owned by Latisha.

> The food at the Dead Dog was good, but what drew tourists to the cafe was the ambiance and the reputation it had developed over the years. Latisha would like to have been able to take all the credit for transforming the Dead Dog from a nice local establishment with a loyal but small clientele to a nice local establishment with a loyal but small clientele and a tourist trap. But, in fact, it had been her auntie's idea.
>
> "Tell them it's dog meat," Norma had said. "Tourists like that kind of stuff."
>
> That had been the inspiration. Latisha printed up menus that featured such things as Dog du Jour, Houndburgers, Puppy Potpourri, Hot Dogs, Saint Bernard Swiss Melts, with Doggie Doos and Deep-fried Puppy Whatnots for appetizers.
>
> She got Will Horse Capture over in Medicine

> River to make up a bunch of photographs like those you see in the hunting and fishing magazines where a couple of white guys are standing over an elephant or holding up a lion's head or stretching out a long stringer of fish or hoisting a brace of ducks in each hand. Only in these photographs, it was Indians and dogs. Latisha's favorite was a photograph of four Indians on their buffalo runners chasing down a herd of Great Danes. (King 117)

It has been said that "a laugh detonates whenever there is a sudden rupture between thinking and feeling. The rupture occurs the instant a situation is seen in another light. The shock of taking another point of view causes, in [Henri] Bergson's words, a momentary 'anesthesia of the heart.'" (Sypher 202) The Dead Dog cafe causes just such a rupture. Eating a domestic animal, man's best friend no less, is not something of which most people would approve, much less want to try—or would they? If it were dressed in "authentic Indian" dress, would those tourists buy it? Besides being very funny, this passage runs a razor edge through the exoticizing of Native lives, both real and imagined. By presenting this from Latisha's point of view, King makes the stereotypes and the commodification of Native cultures very clear, and he gives the reader an opportunity to laugh at representatives of the dominant culture for a change, a position that becomes uncomfortable for non-Native readers only upon second thought. King's wit is very sharp, and sometimes the wound bleeds before the blade is felt. He is, like Coyote, a trickster, as are virtually all Native American writers of fiction.

The quintessential Native American Trickster author is Gerald Vizenor. He wields humor the way Skywalker wields the light saber, only Vizenor takes no prisoners. As Alan Velie has noted, "Vizenor uses Anishinaabe tales; and like Rabelais, Vizenor uses 'laughter linked to genres of rogue, fool and clown,' in the form of discourse of trickster, who combines all three. Vizenor's battle and rebellion are directed against mainstream American culture and ideology. Like others writing in the postmodern tradition of the novel, he uses violence, hyperbole, surrealism and humor to develop a new sensibility." And although Vizenor, in his non-fiction, frequently refers to theorists ranging from Plato to Derrida and is extremely well versed in trickster theory and discourse world wide, it is impossible to read his fiction without seeing as the soul of his writing the trickster figures familiar to Native American cultures. "To Vizenor the tribal world view is comic and communal; the comic spirit is centered in trickster, a figure created by the tribe as a whole, not an individual author." (Velie 130)

Some Native tricksters in the old/new stories take the form of human beings, Napi of the Blackfeet for instance, but others take forms such as Coyote, Raven or Hare, animals which fit the definition of the trickster of literary or anthropological theory very well. Like the hare, most tricksters are very sexual creatures—downright amoral and enthusiastic about it. Anyone who has ever seen a coyote run just far enough in front of a dog so that, in a fatal tease, he runs the dog to death knows just how tricky a coyote can be. Of course Coyote frequently tricks himself or is himself the butt of a joke. Ravens are very smart birds which, when confronted with an unknown object, turn it over, throw it up in the air, pick it apart, investigate its insides and comment on it at length. This sounds very much like Mikhail Bakhtin's description of comedic laughter, trickster's favorite tool:

> Laughter has the remarkable power of making an object come up close, of drawing it into a zone of crude contact where one can finger it familiarly on all sides, turn it upside down, inside out, peer at it from above and below, break open its external shell, look into its center, doubt it, take it apart, dismember it, lay it bare and expose it, examine it freely and experiment with it. Laughter demolishes fear and piety before an object, before a world, making of it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it. (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 24)

Native American tricksters in the oral tradition or in contemporary fiction use laughter to do just that. Part of their function is to investigate and expose the other side, to make us look at ourselves and the world we inhabit in different ways—to prompt examination of the way we think and act and the way others think about us—

without fear or piety. Tricksters are not always nice, but they are usually lovable, and they make us laugh until we cry.

The tricksters in most contemporary Native American novels are very funny but relatively subtle, Uncle Luther in *The Sharpest Sight* or Harlan Bigbear in Medicine River, for instance. Louise Erdrich's Nanapush in *Tracks* is less subtle (Nanapush is the name of the Chippewa trickster), but a non-Native audience would not necessarily categorize him as "trickster," or at least not immediately. In Vizenor's work, however, the tricksters are in control and uncontrollable, and it is impossible to read his work without gaining an appreciation for the power of the trickster's laugh. In Vizenor's word war,

> [t]ribal tricksters are embodied in imagination and liberate the mind; an androgyny, she would repudiate translations and imposed representation, as he would bare the contradictions of the striptease.
>
> The trickster is lascivious, an erotic shimmer, a burn that sunders dioramas and terminal creeds; an enchanter, comic liberator, and word healer. The trickster mediates wild bodies and adamant minds; a chance in third person narratives to turn aside the cold litanies and catechistic monodramas over the measured roads to civilization. The implied author, narrators, the readers, listeners, and the characters, liven a comic and communal discourse. (Vizenor, *Trickster* x)

Although Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin never addressed Native American fiction directly, his ideas regarding comedy and laughter also provide an excellent window on the trickster laugh in action. In his essay "Epic and the Novel," Bakhtin stated that "[i]t is precisely laughter that . . . in general destroys any hierarchical (distancing and valorized) distance. As a distanced image a subject cannot be comical; to be made comical, it must be brought close. Everything that makes us laugh is close at hand, all comical creativity works in a zone of maximal proximity." (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 23-4) King's Dead Dog Cafe brings commodification and appropriation issues into "maximal proximity," as Owens' use of a respected, actual text about

Native Americans brings the "museum-quality Indian" into high relief. One must know a subject well to make it part of a satiric or ironic laugh.

Vizenor often brings up close those things we would most like to ignore. His trickster discourse flows over with humor, but it is most often humor of a very sharp flavor indeed. In *Bearheart: the Heirship Chronicles*, the reader follows an improbable group led by Proud Cedarfair as they travel from Minnesota to New Mexico in a post-apocalyptic pilgrimage tale. At one point, they meet a procession of people grossly deformed by the pollution, acid rain and toxic waste that has virtually ended "civilization." One of the pilgrims watches a parade of people with missing arms, legs, or noses as they pass. "'These families are beautiful,' sighed Little Big Mouse. She waved again and threw kisses and laughed with affection at the passing cripples. 'Look at those people with the plastic masks and purple dream shirts . . . I want to touch them all and feel their energies,' she said clapping her fingertips." She spots a group which has donned compound eye masks and false wings like those of polyphemous moths. She stops the smallest moth and tells him she thinks his wings are beautiful. He explains that his grandmother, who lived in a mental hospital, made them. "She said we would all have fun once in our lives beings moths . . ." The little moth starts to tell of his escape from bandits, but Little Big Mouse cuts him off with "Birds are so beautiful in flight . . . but in my heart I have always wanted to be a giant polyphemous moth with big eyes on my wings." The armless little moth responds succinctly, "There are some disadvantages." (Vizenor, *Bearheart* 148)

The scene as a whole is very funny in a ludicrous, painful sort of way, and it makes it easy to see this situation from the moth's point of view—up close and personal in much the way Native Americans feel when the Winnebago drives up to the reservation so the family can touch people who "really have the right idea about how to live." Vizenor allows us to pick apart this fascination and feel it from the moth's point of view, so when Little Big Mouse asks if she can try on the little moth's wings and the moth's family members look at her in amazement for a moment before they attack her, it is difficult not to cheer for them.

The laughter Vizenor evokes often has very long, sharp and relentless claws. In his work the laughter is sometimes "so raw that it brings grimaces hardly to be distinguished from tragic response. The source of this comic 'shock' is like the 'qualm' stirred by tragedy; it can disorient us, 'disturb' us as confusingly as tragic calamity." (Sypher 198) In true trickster form, Vizenor brings the reader to the real heart of the matter, like it or not. This is an important step in what Bakhtin calls the "uncrowning," of what Vizenor calls "terminal creeds," producing in Bakhtinian terms a "comical operation of dismemberment." (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 24)

Words like dismemberment, shock, and uncrowning might at first glance make Vizenor's work appear negative in focus, but actually it is exactly the opposite. As Kimberly Blaeser says, "If there is a single note intoned more loudly throughout Vizenor's work than any other, that note is survival. . . . Vizenor endeavors to salvage the truly timeless elements of the tribal, to relinquish to history the nonessential accoutrements of the past, and to teach the ways of survival in the new Indian wars—those media-driven, intellectual and verbal skirmishes he calls the 'cultural word wars.'" (Blaeser 38-9) His comic stance produces a healing laughter because, as he says, "stories have the power to liberate and heal, and there are similar encounters that liberate readers in the novels and poems by contemporary postindian authors." (Vizenor, *Manifest* 104)

No "Vanishing Americans" for Vizenor—or for any of the other Native American authors. Survival (or "survivance" to use Vizenor's more complex term) is an ongoing process, and as Søren Kirkegaard noted, "the more thoroughly and substantially a human being exists, the more he will discover the comical." (as quoted in Sypher 196) That is, perhaps, the reason Betty Louise Bell ends her novel, *Faces in the Moon*, with such sharp humor.

Lucie, Bell's Cherokee protagonist, has gone into a library to find her family in the Dawes Rolls. In America, it seems that a very large percentage of the population claims an exotic "Cherokee grandmother"; the result is that Cherokee have to put up with a great deal of assumption that the person is a "wannabe," especially since Cherokee come in a variety of shades. Lucie responds to this condescending assumption. When the librarian asks what tribe she's looking for, she says "Cherokee," and "he smirked and reached behind him for the book. He stretched the heavy black book toward me, grinning broadly at the joke."

> I watch myself reach down and take hold of his collar. My hands curl around the cotton and the top button flies. I pull him across the desk into my face. I speak slowly, deliberately, beyond the rush of anger, blood talking low and clear.
>
> "I ain't asking you to tell me who I think I am. . . . Let me put it to you this way. I am a follower of stories, a negotiator of histories, a wild dog of many lives. I am Quanah Parker swooping down from the hills into your bedroom in the middle of the night. And I am centuries of Indian women who lost their husbands, their children, their minds so you could sit there and grin your shit-eating grin."
>
> I eased him back against his chair and took a pen from my pocket.
>
> I said, "I am your worst nightmare: I am an Indian with a pen." (Bell 191-2)

"I am your worst nightmare: I am an Indian with a pen" is a very interesting statement. Because it is said to a smirking librarian, it recognizes the biases and the misperceptions within the literature he dispenses. It also points perceptively and rather aggressively to the idea that written language, the pen, is a power tool. Bell evidently agrees with Vizenor that Native American writing, particularly fiction, is the jackhammer needed to break apart preconceptions and insure "survivance." As Blaeser notes,

> With the contemporary conflicts about treaty rights, trust status, and tribal sovereignty, the general public may well believe that "the Indian problem" continues to situate itself around land rights. Vizenor knows otherwise. The destiny of the American Indian rests with language; survive through tribal oral tradition, or be made to vanish through popular, scientific, literary, and political rhetoric. (Blaeser 39)

Sometimes the use of humor in this survival-through-oral-tradition takes unusual forms in contemporary Native American fiction. For instance, in the final pages of *Dark River*, Owens' characters—of the positive and negative sort, and even one very likable ghost—talk about how the story will end, try a few things and then decide on an ending that is less "hackneyed," less like the ending of a traditional Euroamerican novel.

> The earth had opened up, and two enormous mandibles framed by spider legs reached out and seized Jake. In a moment he was gone, dragged into a hole that closed at once.
>
> "My idea," Shorty said.

"Good one," Jessie [the ghost] replied appreciatively.

The bad guy, Jensen, is disarmed and tied up by the other characters.

> "Maybe we should have lightning strike him while he's tied," Jessie said.
>
> "Maybe you should go away now, Jessie," Shorty replied. "I think it's time for a poignant scene in which you have to go to the land of the dead, leaving your loved ones behind. . . . New role." He nodded at Jessie. "Ghost now, just like Xavier says. Whistling in the dark, bringing bad dreams, all that."
>
> Jessie drew himself up to full height, crossed his arms, and peered down at the group with great dignity. Lightning flashed behind him, and they all saw its flare through his transluscence. In a moment he was gone.

But the magnificence of the ghost's disappearance is something you might find in a "regular" story and ill suited to the very human reactions of Owens' characters, even one that happens to be a ghost. The other characters talk about the practicalities of getting the bodies out of the canyon and the comment is made that one of the dead ones "would have wanted it this way." Jensen replies, "Avrum would have wanted to not get shot, I'll bet," and the ghost just has to pop back in for another word.

> "You didn't get shot again, at least," Jessie said, materializing abruptly and then vanishing.
>
> Jensen shivered. "I hope he doesn't keep doing that."
>
> "Last cameo, I think," Shorty said. (Owens, *Dark River* 284-5)

Of course having the characters discuss the ending is a bit unusual any way you look at it, but it is very much in line with the Native attitude towards storytelling, in which the teller and the one hearing the story are both active participants in the story itself.

Dark River is a dark novel; the issues with which it deals, Native and non-Native, are not funny, but like many other novels by Native Americans it can make a reader laugh out loud. For the novels to be active participants in Native American "survivance,"it seems that moments of comic tone are very nearly a necessity.

The form of comedy, with its circularity and cultural centeredness, offers a decidedly optimistic model of the world. Since a large portion of the world thinks of Native Americans as people who existed in the past with only a few straggling survivors here and there, tragic form is not generally a first literary choice for contemporary Native American authors. Tragedy empathetically follows a hero as he or she falls, but that the fall will occur is never in question. As Erdrich's character Nector Kashpaw says, "Remember Custer's saying? The only good Indian is a dead Indian? Well from my dealings with whites I would add to that quote: 'The only interesting Indian is dead, or dying by falling backwards off a horse.'" (Erdrich 124)

Comedy, on the other hand, allows the protagonist to try out tragedy and discard it, to return to the center, to return to the community where healing and life-affirmation can occur. Comedic form celebrates connectedness, the recognition that "one need not stand alone, and to accept the concept of mutuality in one's existence. Such a response uses strategies of cooperation; surrendering autonomy provides the impetus for comedy with its essential message that the community survives and, within its survival, individuals can prosper." (Teague 10-11)

The actor on his deathbed said, "Dying's easy. It's comedy that's hard." Writing in the form of comedy and with comic tone is no doubt hard for Native American authors, too, but these "word warriors" steadfastly refuse the easy route. Like Coyote, Hare and Raven, they exist to turn us over, turn us around and make us look at ourselves, Native or non-Native, just a little differently. Sometimes it hurts a bit, and sometimes it's a very funny sight.

End Notes

[1] The European soldiers and settlers involved in the massacre were assisted by the Hurons, who were enemies of the Pequot long before the "discovery" of America. This is probably part of the "helpful Native" legend that goes with the Thanksgiving story, along with the fact that most tribes, including the Pequots, did initially welcome and assist the white settlers. The connection between this massacre and the Thanksgiving myth is made poignantly in the docu-drama "Witness," directed by George Burdeau.

[2] The same is true for other Native American art forms. Owens notes: "Chippewa artist Sam English, whose paintings often feature traditionally costumed and confident Indians wearing sunglasses and seeming to challenge the viewer to attempt a cultural definition, has explained, 'I'm trying to paint Indians who are making it in both worlds, guys who have jobs like everybody else in the country but who go home at five and become traditional Indians again.' Like Vizenor, English locates indices of Indian identity in humor: 'Humor that's kept us all going during the bad times. A lot of people don't realize that, and I try to show it.'" Owens, Louis. Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1992, 5-6.

Works Cited

Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Epic and the Novel." *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Edited by Michael Holquist. Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and his World*. Translated by Helene

Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, reprint of 1964 edition.

Bell, Betty Louise. *Faces in the Moon*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.

Blaeser, Kimberly M. *Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.

Charney, Maurice. *Shakespearean Comedy*. New York: New York Literary Forum, 1980.

Deloria,Jr., Vine. "American Fantasy," *The Pretend Indians: Images of Native Americans in the Movies*, eds. Gretchen Bataille and Charles L. P. Silet, (Ames: Iowa University Press, 1980), xv.

Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1993.

King, Thomas. *Green Grass, Running Water*. New York: Bantam Books, 1993.

McGuire, Patrick A. "More psychologists are finding that discrete uses of humor promote healing in their patients." *American Psychological Association Journal*, vol. 30, no. 3, March, 1999, http://www.apa.org.

Owens, Louis. *Dark River*. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1999.

Owens, Louis. *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel*. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1992.

Owens, Louis. *The Sharpest Sight*. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1992.

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.

Sypher, Wylie. *Appendix to Comedy*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956.

Teague, Frances, editor. *Acting Funny: Comic Theory and Practice in Shakespeare's Plays*. Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994.

Velie, Alan. "The Trickster Novel." *Narrative Chance: Postmodern Discourse on Native American Indian Literatures*, edited by Gerald Vizenor. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Trickster of Liberty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.

CCHA

COMMUNITY COLLEGE
HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION

c/o Essex County College
303 University Avenue
Newark, New Jersey 07102

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 5300
NEWARK, NJ

198